MEMORIES

of

Richard Oliver Young, D. Min.

and the one who made so many of them possible ..., his beloved wife, Madge Mixon Young

Friends Call Them

Dick & Madge

Our Wonderful Children

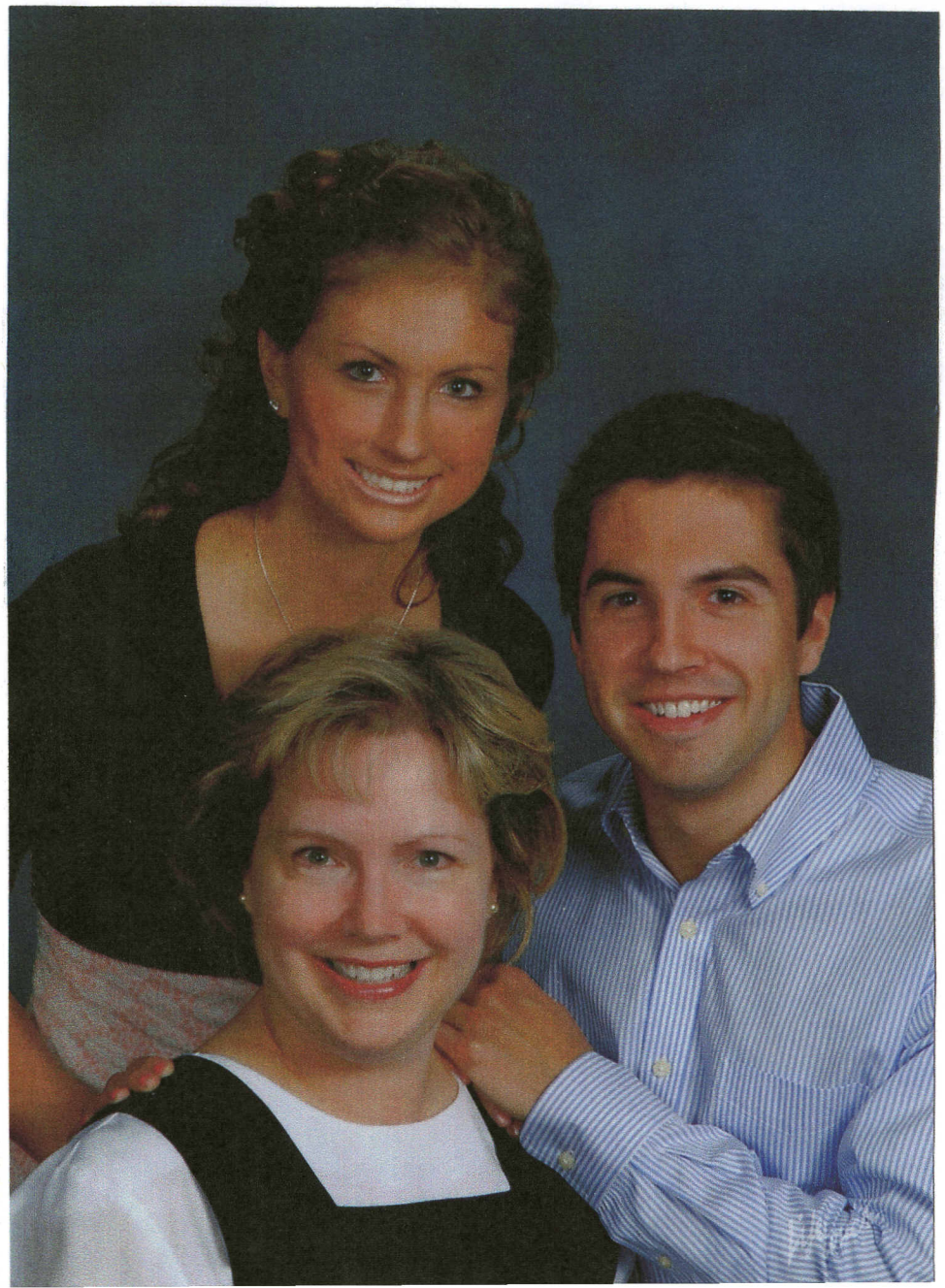
At Left

Rich, Jr., by no means the lesser, He is now a CMU Professor. (Shown with lovely Barbara, his wife}

Below

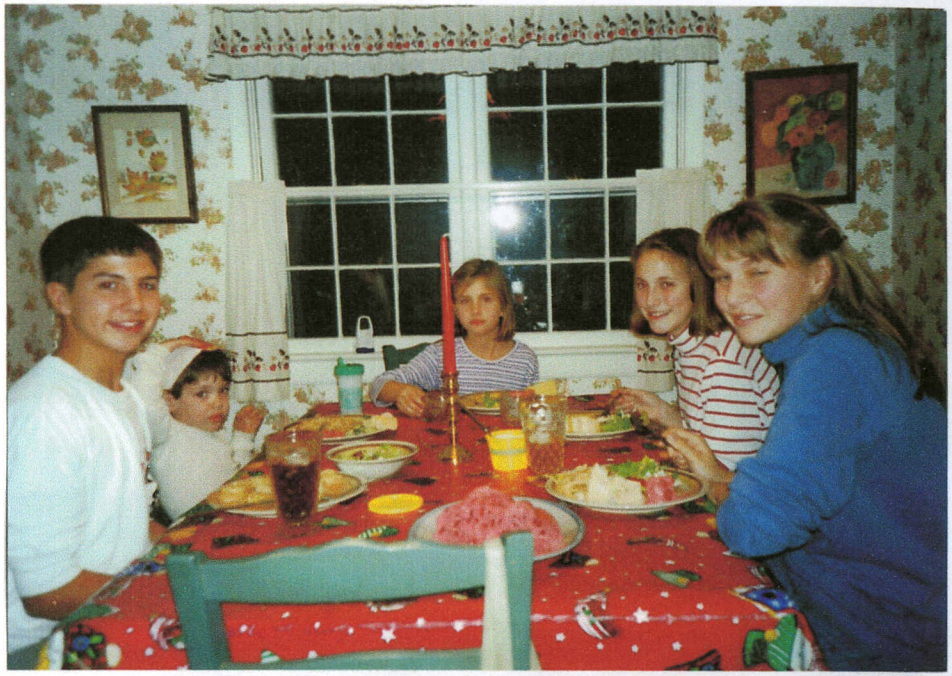
Radiant Jean, both writer and teacher, is doing much better than having married a preacher.
(Along with husband Dr. Bill Kilby, and "couldn't have asked for better" daughters, Marie and Christie.

Sally, the third in line, teaches at Harrisonburg High, and is doing just fine. Shown with her two talented offspring, She takes time from her teaching To help the choir sing. (Shown with Sarah and Paul)



As for Greg, what can his Dad say? He knows his home allowance was Short of Sach's pay. But for him money Alo~e does not life fulfill; rather family And church, and doing God's will. (Shown with Annie, Ian, and Madeleine.)

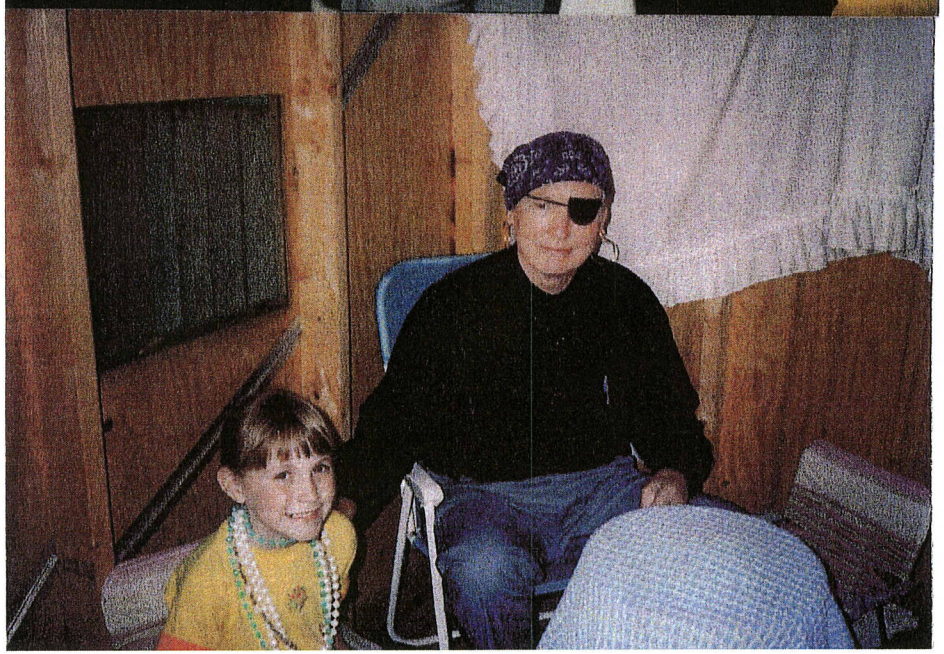
OUR BEAUTIFUL GRANDCHILDREN: those two at the piano can play almost anything that way. The pictures on the right were taken at Rockwood Lodge, our longest home place.



BELOW (left)

Top: Herb, me, and Buddy in Hawaii at PHSA meeting in 1991.

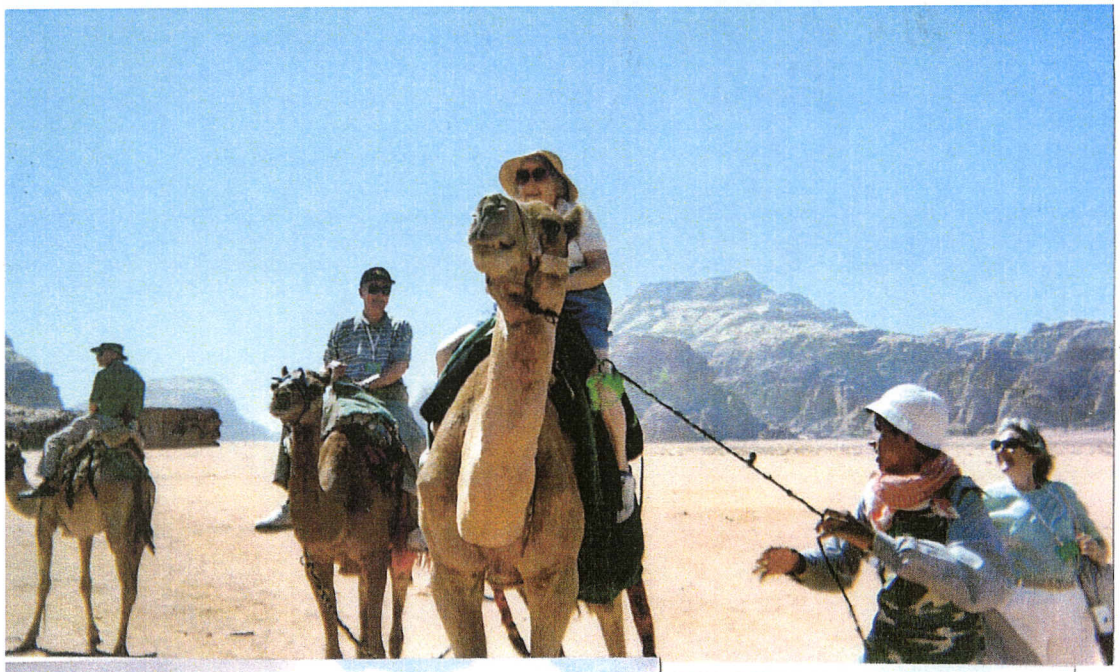
Bottom: Playing gypsy fortune teller for Christie & Marie c. 1995



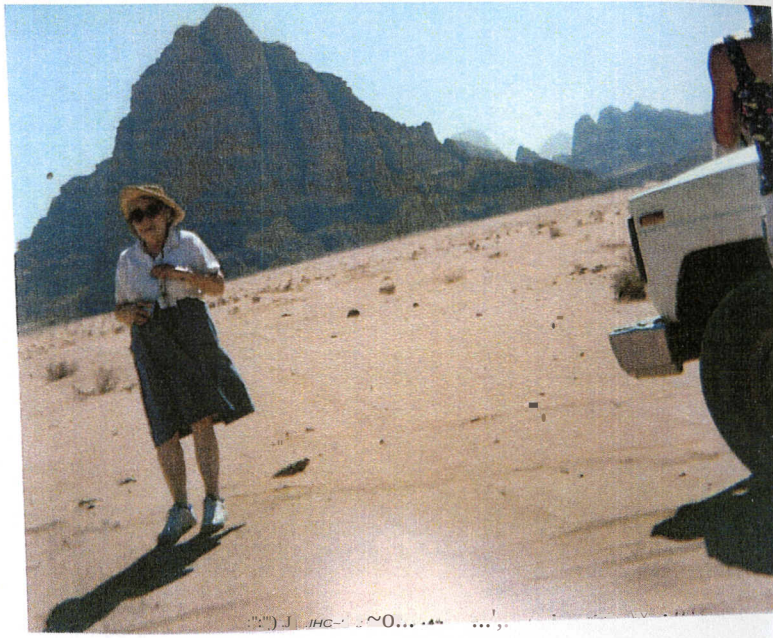
BELOW(right)

Top: I spent many hours around campfires. I do not know which one this was, or where.

Bottom: Bill Kilby and me at the Masters in 1997.

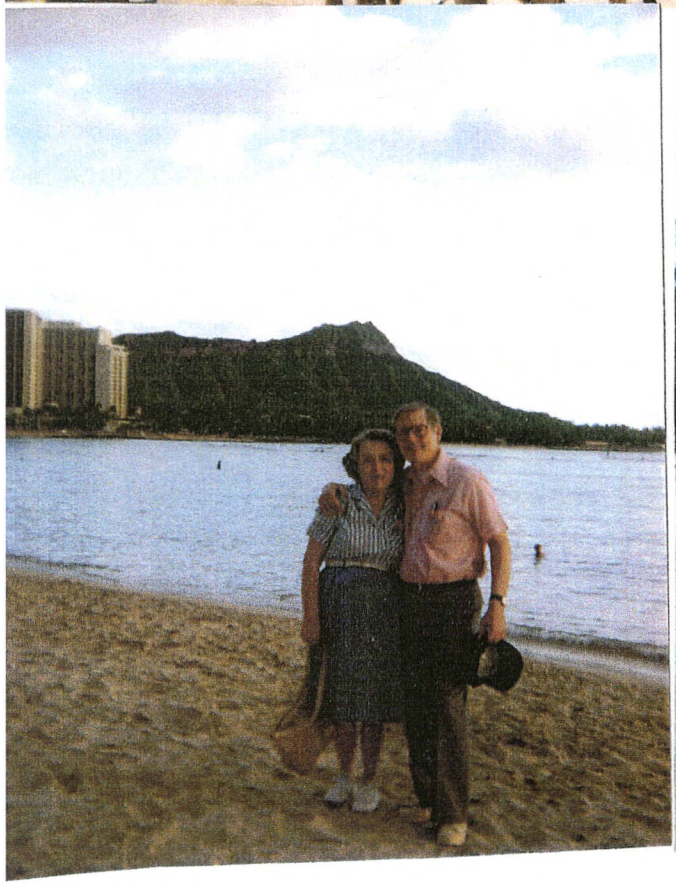


OH THE PLACES WE'VE BEEN!



Clockwise from top left

Jordan desert
Can she ride?!



Same place:
7 pillars
of wisdom

Pyramid in Yucatan

Eiffel tower

Diamond Head

PROLOGUE
to
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RICHARD OLIVER YOUNG

Richard Young was born May 30, 1922 near LeCompte Louisiana to Benjamin Walter Young and Alice Austin Young. He was the fifth of eight siblings. in order as follows: Ruby, Robert, Essie Dee, Wallace, Richard, Herbert, Jewell, and Dennis.

The family lived at Burnside Hill at the birth of Richard, but moved soon after to the Henderson place near Blue Lake. After a couple of years, they moved to Forest Hill near the railroad track, then to the Myer's place east of Forest Hill when Richard was about four, and then to the Eazell place in the lower community when Richard was about five. After a couple of years they moved to the Fowler place in the upper community which was then owned by Charlie Young, Ben's brother. When Richard was about ten, they moved to their home on an adjoining farm, which was the first home that they had owned. When Richard was about fifteen, they traded their home and land for the home and land of Paul Lamkin who lived in the lower community. Richard lived there until he entered the Navy.

Richard graduated from high school in 1939, ranking third in his class of nineteen. He served in the CCC for a year and entered the U. S. Navy in August, 1940. He was involved in the battles of Pearl Harbor, Midway, Coral Sea, Quadalcanal, and the invasion of Sicily. He was sent to officer training under the V-12 program in 1944 at the University of Richmond and to the ROTC program at Duke. He was given an honorable discharge in 1945 due to his having contracted rheumatic fever.

After the service, he entered LSU and worked toward a degree in Petroleum Engineering. He changed to math after taking off about a year to work with a seismograph crew in Oklahoma, and graduated from LSU in 1949 with a bachelor's degree in math. He married Madge Mixon of Osyka on January 29, 1948, and they had four children: Richarrd, Jr. in 1952, Mildred Jean in 1954, Sally Ann in 1956, and Thomas Gregory in 1963.

Richard continued at LSU on a teaching fellowship after graduating from LSU while working toward a Ph.D. in math, but just before he was to begin his dissertation, his major professor died. This death would have required as much as two or three additional years of work and study, so Richard discontinued his Ph.D. program and went to work as an actuarial trainee in 1952. By 1957, when he went to Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, he had risen to be the Actuary of the Old National Insurance Company of Houston, Texas.

His work in the ministry was mostly among smaller churches in the deep south; however, his last regular work before retirement was as the Minister of Congregational Care in the large Harvey Browne Church of Louisville, Ky. He has served many smaller churches as interim after retirement.

What follows are some of his remembrances of the times described above.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RICHARD OLIVER YOUNG

Chapter I

Stories I Have Heard About My Family

The most important person to me when I was young, other than our immediate family, was my grandfather Richard Austin. I suppose that was because my mother was his only daughter, and since her mother had died the year I was born, and she had only one living sibling, her brother Richard, my grandfather was probably the most important person to her. I was named for him, and in recognition of that fact, he gave me an iron baby-bed which we still had in our family as I was growing up. I was told that I fell out of that bed and broke my nose when I was a baby. I have no recollection of that fall, but it is true that my nose is slightly crooked.

My story about Grandpa Austin begins with his father Joseph Austin, and his mother Narcissa Hodge. My knowledge of Joseph consists of the fact that he married Narcissa, that he enlisted in the Confederate Army and was a private in Company D, Cons. Cres. (whatever that may mean) of the Louisiana Infantry, was killed near Mansfield, Louisiana during General Richard Taylor's defense of the Red River in 1865, and is buried in the Confederate Cemetery near Mansfield. I have received a Cross of Military Service from the United Daughters of the Confederacy, No. 12482, in recognition of his service and my own during World War II.

My knowledge of Narcissa is not much greater, although she did live much longer, and did not die until after my birth. She received a small pension from the State of Louisiana as long as she lived, and remarried a man whose surname was Ray who predeceased her by a number of years. Near the end of her life, she lived in a small house near my grandfather's house until her death.

In addition to these known facts are several stories I have heard from my double-first cousin Clifton Austin, who was eight years older than I and had access to a good deal more family history than I did. However, my cousin was a master story-teller, and might have added a bit to make the stories more interesting.

One story told how Joseph left his young wife Narcissa with their four sons, Joseph, Isaiah, Richard, and one other, and went off to war. He left them crying at the gate, as she was sure that he would not come back, and she did not want him to go. During that time when he was still alive, she saw a band of horsemen coming toward their house, so she gathered the children together quickly, and they ran to hide behind a log. They rode their horses right into her house and generally destroyed everything that was any worth that they did not take. They were not northern soldiers but southern scalawags. She and the boys stayed hidden several hours behind that log, and all during that time all of them, even including the baby Richard, were very

quiet, and never made any outcries. Clifton compared them to the baby wolves that have a natural instinct of fear.

Another story told how Narcissa was unable to provide for her boys, so she gave the three older boys to her father and mother to raise, and she moved over on the bayou (Bayou Bouef, I think) in Rapides Parish and worked as a midwife. During this time, her father became drunk and severely abused the boys. He threw a stick of firewood at one of the boys in his anger, and the boy died as a result. Clifton said that they simply carried the boy into the woods and buried him.

As a result of this, the other two boys, with the help of their grandmother, ran away from home, carrying only the little food with them that she provided. They knew their mother lived by a bayou in Rapides Parish, so they began a long walk in that direction, begging food and sleeping out at night. Eventually they found the bayou, and began to wind their way down its muddy banks until finally they found their mother.

Later when Richard, now called Dick, was age 16, he was driving his mother to her midwifery work, and on one occasion there were twins. She called Dick in to help her, and he learned from that experience how to be a midwife, and consequently he himself undertook this profession for awhile. During that time he was known as Dr. Dick.

Clifton said that great-grandmother Narcissa, (now called Grandma Ray as she had remarried but her second husband had also died) was not a very clean person, and was not allowed in the house of her son Richard during her old age. Apparently she was one half Indian on her mother's side, and not used to white people's ways. He provided a little hut without a floor for her to live in, and she had only one cooking utensil, an iron pot. As her days were coming to an end in her nineties, he said she went out into the woods and found the bark of a certain tree, and made her a little tea in her iron pot. After she drank that tea, she slowly went to sleep and never awakened.

Grandpa Austin came very often to visit us when I was between four and six years of age. We lived then on a backwoods farm about halfway between Forest Hill and Lecompte, Louisiana. To the south of us, and to the west, one could go miles and miles without encountering civilization of any kind: only creeks, springs, swamps, and lakes bounded by rolling hills or wolds. Grandpa Austin lived near one of those lakes, situated about five to ten miles south of us. Between his place and ours there were only a couple of backwoods farmers and their families and woods. Grandpa would catch fish from the lake and come by our place in his buggy to take fish to the market in Lecompte.

Most of my memories of my grandfather center on his driving his horse Dan in his buggy. When he would return from Lecompte and come to our place, called the Ezell place from the people who owned it and rented it to us, he would always have a pocket full of candy which he would distribute to us children. One time he allowed me to drive old Dan, and when we came to a clear rushing stream of water which we forded, Dan stopped automatically for a drink. The memory of the cool, clear water gurgling over the sand and rocks, and Dan lowering his head to drink, will always be fixed in my mind.

During my lifetime, Grandpa Austin was married to his third wife. My understanding is that there was a second wife for a short time, but I do not know her name. My mother called the third wife "Miss Laura" and as a consequence I, along with all my siblings, called her "Grandma Laura." I remember staying overnight with them once and just before bedtime, Grandpa read from the Bible, we all knelt, and he led us in prayer. I was not accustomed to that in our house.

Our family acquired a horse named Nelly when I was about twelve, and I had to ride her bareback when I got to ride her at all because we had no saddle nor any money to buy one. One day I was visiting Grandpa Austin and noticed that he had an old saddle laying up in the barn which he never used. The saddle had no stirrups but otherwise it was in good condition. I hinted that I could possibly make good use of it, and he gave it to me. I fashioned some stirrups out of ropes, and I used this saddle to ride Nelly until I left home a few years later.

Once I asked Grandpa about his being an Indian. He said that he was not sure how much Indian blood he had in him, but he said that when he was a boy he had spoken a good deal of words that he believed were Indian. He still remembered some of those words, and he tried to teach them to me but I could not get the hang of them. All I remember now is that some words seemed to denote both objects and motion, as for example one word seemed to mean "running dog." Someone has suggested that Grandpa had a chance earlier to declare himself an Indian and thus live on a reservation, but he decided against this as he wanted to live as a regular American. I am not sure that this is true.

Many of the stories I heard about Grandpa were less than flattering. The reason might have been the fact that his father Joseph had been killed in the Civil War at the Battle of Mansfield when Grandpa was only three years old, and his impoverished mother Narcissa had the sole responsibility of providing for him and nurturing him.

One story I heard was how Grandpa had a run-in with the law. In the backwoods where he lived, many pigs ran wild, and people would try to capture a wild pig when it was first born and put their own marking on the pig's ears. Whenever a family marked the pig with their brand, the pig was supposed to belong to them from then on, even if it were in the wild. If anyone caught one of those marked pigs, he would not be allowed to keep it. It seems that Grandpa was caught red-handed butchering one of those marked pigs, and he was sentenced to six months in jail. While Grandpa was injail, an African American was accused of murder, found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. He was put in the same cell with my grandfather and they became friends. He convinced my grandfather that he was innocent, and when he asked my grandfather to help him escape, my grandfather agreed. But when the man got free, he went to the authorities and told them of my grandfather's help, hoping by showing this kind of honesty to be exonerated of the crime. Instead, they carried out his sentence and hanged him, and added another six months to my grandfather's sentence.

My grandfather supposedly had the remarkable gift of foretelling the future. One instance of it was when he was a child. He dreamed that he found a pot filled with money under the

doorsteps of his home, and just as he discovered it, his mother called to him. He dreamed that he quickly buried it over with some loose dirt. He remembered the dream, and so the next day he went to the spot that he dreamed about, and sure enough, there was a pot with money in it. At that instant his mother called, as he had dreamed, and he quickly covered it over. With the passage of time he forgot about the dream and the pot of money. Later when he was older, he remembered and returned to the place in order to look for the money, but he found that the house had burned and the place was overgrown with brush. All signs of where he had found the pot were obliterated.

When Grandpa's children were grown, my mother's older brother Anderson had become a local bully in the backwoods area. One story about Uncle Anderson tells how he was awakened one night by a marauder in the house. He got his gun, a 22 caliber rifle, and asked the intruder his name, but the man did not answer. He told the man he would shoot him unless he answered, but still he did not answer, so Uncle Anderson shot him. This happened three times, and the man never fell, but finally walked off. There was a trail of blood leaving the house the next day, and later a report in the nearby community that a black man who had died from gunshot wounds was found dead by the railroad track.

Uncle Anderson eventually came into open conflict with several other local toughs. During an argument in which several had ganged up on him, Uncle Anderson drew a pistol on them, and after that, they were out to get him. It was about that time that Grandpa had another dream. In this dream he saw Uncle Anderson together with my father and his other son Richard in a gunfight with the toughs, and in this fight, Uncle Anderson was killed.

One morning later Uncle Anderson asked Uncle Richard and my dad to go duck hunting with him but Grandpa remembered his dream and tried to persuade them not to go. Grandma Austin told them that if they did not go, the local toughs would hear about this and think he was afraid of them; she thought the toughs would make life miserable for Uncle Anderson from then on. So, taking her advice, they decided to go. As soon as it was daylight, Grandpa hitched up Dan to the wagon and went to the spot he had seen in his dream, and there he found that the three had been ambushed and all of them wounded. Uncle Anderson's injuries led to his death three days later. This happened in 1916, and Uncle Anderson's grave alongside Grandma Austin's grave is found in the Randolph Cemetery, located in the backwoods near the place I grew up.

The most unpleasant thing I heard about my grandfather concerned my grandmother, Ellen Chaffin Austin. She was raised in the home of Anderson Chaffin, the manager of slaves on a large plantation near Cheneyville, Louisiana. This ancestor of mine is mentioned in the book entitled "Twelve Years A Slave" written by John Northup. My grandmother grew up after the Civil War, and was probably used to a hard life under such parents, but she did not find life easier under Grandpa Austin's domination. I have heard that he often beat her with a belt, and I have also heard that she had terribly bad migraine headaches. At any rate, there came a point when she could not bear living any longer, so in 1922, the year I was born, she took a large quantity of carbolic acid. She lived a few days and regretted what she did because she was in so much pain. The state's record of her death says that she was mentally deranged when she died. She had lived as the daughter of a slave driver who knew how to use a whip on slaves; she had known the abuse of a

wife-beating husband; she had suffered wretchedly with migraine headaches; she had died a most painful death from acid poison; and her grave is all but forgotten in a bush covered cemetery in central Louisiana. But below the hillside where she is buried, beautiful Cockerel Creek flows gently over rocks and sand, perhaps portending a more beautiful and serene dwelling than any she had enjoyed here.

I do not remember much about Grandpa Young. I remember that his face was red and his hair was white, and he looked awfully old. But of course, I was only a small child at the time so perhaps he would not look all that old to a more mature person. As I recall, he lived with Uncle Fayette McElwee, his wife Aunt Zelma and Aunt Mae's son Walter Valletton near Meeker, Louisiana. He would occasionally go around to visit his other children. His wife Adaline, like my Grandma Austin, had died in 1922. I have one image in mind of him in his tomato garden with large, ripe tomatoes. I heard that he loved to argue religion with Grandpa Austin .. When he came to see us, he liked to sit on the front porch in a rocking chair and chew tobacco. That was bad enough, but when it came time to spit, he would turn around and spit on the wall. My mother believed in absolute cleanliness, and she hated to see him come because of that. She would hint and hint that spitting on the wall was unacceptable behavior, but it did absolutely no good; he would always turn around and spit on the wall. Finally Mama came up with what she thought would be a fool-proof solution. She told my brother Robert to spit on the wall in front of Grandpa, and she would really rake him over the coals for doing it. She felt that Grandpa could not fail to take the hint. She and Robert carried the plan off beautifully, and after they did, Grandpa turned right around and spat on the wall.

I heard several stories about myself that happened before I reached the age of memory. I was born at home with no doctor attending near Meeker, Louisiana on a place called Burnside Hill, owned at the time I believe by Grandpa Young. Interstate 49 now goes almost directly over the spot where I was born, just south of the road between Forest Hill and Lecompte. My mother told me how I loved popcorn at an early age, and once I stuffed myself so full of it that I had to be taken to the doctor in Lecompte to have my stomach pumped out. My Dad was working then as a millwright and my mother was left alone with me and my other siblings during the day. One day a beggar came by and wanted food. Mama told him to stay outside and she would get him something to eat. He perceived that no man was present.and he started barging in the door. She had a double barreled shot-gun leaning against the door, so she picked it up and shot one barrel over his head. That was enough for the tramp; he sailed over the fence as he ran out of the yard.

Dad always claimed that he was a descendent ofPocohontas. He said that his grandmother Juliana Randolph had descended from a certain John Rolph who changed his name to Randolph. He often spoke of an old Bible that had all this information in it. Later, when I was in the Navy, I told him I wanted to take him with me to the people's house where the Bible was supposed to be, to see for myself. We found the old Bible, and it did have a lot of records in it, but it did not go back as far as Pocohontas. However, I do not doubt that we might have inherited Indian blood from my father's side as well as my mother's because my Dad's sister Zelma was very dark and had what appeared to be strong Indian or oriental characteristics.

Top Left::My great-grandmother Prudence Smith Chaffin, Grandmother Ellen Chaffin Austin, and great-grandfather Leonard Chaffin.

Top Middle: In CCC at Gerlach, Nevada with friends Floyd Wilson (by me), Leon Racine, (Kneeling at right) and two others on snowy mountain.

~ At right: Uncle Anderson Austin who was killed in a gun-fight when he was about age 30.

At left T he Sunday School I attended as a child: Top row: Mrs. Bill Mitchell, Mrs. John Henderson, Joe Nugent, Nina Williams, Willie Mitchell, Delma Henderson, Lucille, Henderson, Nora Mitchell, & Buford Giles. M. Row: Mrs. Harrison Williams, Essie Dee Young, Viola Giles, Dalton Williams, Blanchard Giles, Hazel Henderson, Rosa Lee Hair, Joe Mitchell, Wallace Young & Charles Young. B. Row: Richard Young, Doris Williams, Evelyn Mitchell, Juanita Young, Clifton Henderson, Elder W. B. Mitchell, Mrs. W. B. Mitchell, Alice Young, Jewel Young, and Martha Lou Williams.

CHAPTER II

My Earliest Memories

Our family moved frequently from one house to another when I was young, but we never moved out of the general area of Forest Hill. These moves were occasioned by our not owning any land for ourselves until I was about six or seven. When we moved from my birthplace, we went to Butter's settlement between Forest Hill and Blue Lake, where my grandfather Austin had his boat landing. I am told that I used to get up on a stump and preach to my brothers and sisters in that place, but I think the story is apocryphal. I do not remember anything at all about that place; however it is the only house I lived in with my mother and father that is still standing.

We moved from there near to Forest Hill, and that is where my memory picks up. I was three or four years old at the time. We lived near a railroad, and I remember a large work bench in the front yard, and I remember dad working on chairs there.

When I was about four, we moved to the Myer's place, on the south side of the road going toward LeCompte, about four miles east of Forest Hill. Some incidents that occurred there are still vivid in my memory. Once my older brother Wallace and I found an opossum out in the woods and hit it with a stick. The little animal began to foam at the mouth, and look so pitiful that we thought we had killed it, so we told our mother about it. She laughed, and told us to go back and check on our "dead possum." We did, but it had disappeared.

We had a large chicken coop near the house made of slats placed an inch or so apart. Somehow I got my foot caught between the slats, and I really let out a yell but I could not get my foot out again. I remember the relief I felt when someone helped me get my foot out.

The area in front of our house had many chincapin bushes on it and we used to crack open the burr around the nut with our teeth. The purplish nut was very tasty. There are not many chincapin bushes to be found in that area anymore.

My mother attended the Church of God at that time, and a person we called Grandpa Mitchell was the leading elder in charge. Mama took me once to see Grandma Mitchell and I remember that she had all kinds of nice things in her kitchen. She served us jello with whipped cream, my first introduction to that delicacy. One of her sons took me to the barn with him to show me how he milked the cows, and he wanted to squirt some of the milk directly into my mouth. I went along with him but didn't like the idea. I still don't.

One of my most painful experiences occurred while we lived there. My younger brother Herbert and I were swinging in the front yard and as usual, we were bare footed. Our little dog came up to us, and seemed to want to bite us. It was frothing at the mouth. It bit Herbert, and I kicked him on the head and got some of the froth on my foot. It was determined that the dog had rabies, and the doctor said I needed shots along with my brother because I had an open sore

on my foot, and he was afraid that I was infected. There was no pain connected with the dog, but the pain came from a long needle which the doctor shot directly into our stomachs. No pain I have experienced since could quite match it. Perhaps that is why doctors are not always on my list of my favorite people; however, I have to admit that I am rather fond of our son-in-law Bill.

We moved from the Myer's place a distance of about three miles to the Eazell place. It was just as isolated, and was bounded on the south and east sides by deep woods with many clear running streams of water. On the west and south sides of us were scattered homes and farms which formed the "lower"community. The upper community was about midway on the road between Forest Hill and LeCompte, and for that reason was often called "Midway."

It was at the Eazell place that I started school. The five oldest of us would leave in the morning and walk: around a large field that belonged to Mr. Musgrove, the top elder in the Primitive Baptist Church, go in front of his house, and up a hill to the one room schoolhouse. Outside was a bell that was attached to a post which would be rung to take in or dismiss classes. There were two wooden outhouses, one for each sex. Inside the building was a pot-bellied stove and some pew benches. The building served both as a school and as a church.

Near the school was Paul's cemetery, and there was much activity there with funerals. Our school water-well was not far distant from the cemetery, and someone almost stopped us from drinking the water from our school well by starting the rumor that human hair had been found in our water. As a matter of fact, we were already a little skeptical about drinking the water because of the well's proximity to the graves.

I was first introduced to work when we lived there. I was given the regular job of going to find our cow in the evening and driving her home. I loved the job because I got to go walking in the woods, down by the running creeks. I would often pick wild violets and bring them to my mother. Our cow had a bell with a distinctive ring to it, and when I heard that bell I would recognize it even though there might be several other cows around with bells. I liked that job, but I soon found out that work could be drudgery. One fall, possibly soon after I turned five, my parents told me it was time for me to learn to pick cotton. My older brothers and sisters were picking cotton for the Davenports who lived on the farm contiguous to us on the west, and I was to go with them. I did not pick much cotton, but I think my parents' main idea was to introduce me to work, and in this they succeeded.

It was at the Eazell place that the Austin family begins to claim a place in my memory. The children were double first cousins since our mother had married their mother's brother, and our father had married their father's sister. There was almost a step for step cousin, each one matching the age of one of us. The main difference was that all of them were males, at least down to number 6, and we were about evenly split male and female. The one nearest my age was named Tommy, but about all I remember about him at this age was that he always got a present at Christmas and liked to brag about it. I never got much of a present, and never got one that was as fancy as his.

CHAPTER III

In The Upper Community

To move to the upper community was something like coming out of the woods. The road connecting Forest Hill and LeCompte was its main thoroughfare, and it was far more thickly populated than the lower community. Poole's store was on that road as were also Stoke's nursery and Poole's nursery. The road to the lower community branched off of it across from the Pattersons, and it ended at Paul's cemetery. Most of the people living in the lower community were from the Musgrove family or Bailey family, and all were Primitive Baptists. People living in the upper community were either adherents of the Church of God (later most changed to the Assembly of God) or Missionary Baptists.

We moved to the upper community when I was about six. The place to which we moved was owned by Uncle Charlie Young who was Dad's older brother. The place bordered on the main road, and the house was right next to an older roadbed. Some people said this had been the old Spanish Trail, and the location of the house was at the spot that the stage coach had stopped. Whether or not this is true I do not know, but I do know that my brother Wallace and I found many nickels dated from the 1850's, and many Indian Head copper coins. I still have them in my possession.

I started to school in Forest Hill shortly after we moved there. I had gone to the one room schoolhouse in the lower community when I was five, but I was not in a regular grade, and I imagine that the teacher tolerated me being there only because this made the crowd large enough to meet the state quota. In the new place I became a regular first grader, and I got to ride the school bus daily to and from Forest Hill High School. The bus was a model T with a seat along either side lengthwise, and a double seat lengthwise in the middle. Being smaller, I had to sit in the middle seat, and this was my permanent place until I got in high school.

On my first day of school I saw a group of boys around a tree and they were talking about climbing it. It was in fact a very climbable tree, so when one of them said that I was afraid to climb it, I decided to show him. I went right up that tree with no trouble. About that time an adult, who I later found out was the first grade teacher,Miss Cox, came out with a large switch in her hand, called me to come down and led me to the closet. She gave me a severe whipping which made a lasting impression on me. I found out later that she had told the boys not to climb the tree and I was an innocent victim of their fun.

I soon learned also that a sharp-toed shoe can really hurt when used to kick you in the shin. There were several Bailey boys in our community and two of them, brothers L. C. and Kenneth, were rather sharp tempered. I must have done something to set them off, because I remember very well the pain that Kenneth's sharp-toed shoe was able to generate. They won the round that day and got their "bluff in on me." As a matter of fact, I did not have any further trouble with them until about the sixth grade, when their cousin Natie Bailey got me involved in a scrap that he was having with them. They won that day as well because Natie abandoned

the fight and left me to contend with both of them. Fighting was not my strength,

We did have one fighter in our family: Wallace. Wallace had been hooked by a cow when he was very young and it had permanently disfigured his eyelid. Many of the kids in school would make fun of him, calling him "Squint Eye," or some such name, and Wallace did not take kindly to that sort of sport. He would tackle anyone regardless of their size who offended him in this way. He seemed to grow to love fighting, and nearly every school day he would be tangled up with some other youngster in a fist fight. He had only about two weeks left before finishing high school when he had the fight that seems to almost ended his love for fighting. He got into some kind of trouble and the principal of our High School, Mr. Campbell, was going to give him some licks with his paddle. But Wallace decided that he would not allow it. He struck Mr. Campbell, and was immediately expelled. If this had been allowed to stand, Wallace would not have gotten his diploma. But Mama went down to see Mr. Campbell, and practically got on her knees begging him to change his mind. Finally he agreed that if Wallace would come in and apologize, and submit to his licks with the paddle, he would rescind the expulsion. Wallace was very thankful for the way this turned out.

Besides fighting, I remember another experience Wallace had. Chemistry was a big subject in our school, and most young people really wanted to pass on up to high school so they could perform chemical experiments. Apparently someone, possibly a student, left some high powered bottled acid with the trash and it was left out behind the annex building. Wallace got that bottle, opened it up, and spilled it down the front of his clothes. It did not harm Wallace, but it did effectively disrobe him in the very place he would have liked to be well clothed. I still remember him clutching his clothes together and trying to get some help.

I had an experience in the first or second grade that demonstrates to me that I had by that time learned to be devious. The principal had strictly forbidden any school children to go out near the railroad track, but one day my cousin Charles Young and I not only went near it, we sat on the track and were talking when one of the Taylor boys came by. He saw us and said that he was going to tell the principal on us, but as soon as he was unable to see us, we ran ahead of him and told the principal that we had seen him playing on the track. What is more, we told the principal that he planned to say we did it. When the Taylor boy showed up, the principal was waiting for him. He really got a whipping, the one we deserved.

I saw my first airplane when we lived at Uncle Charlie's place. There was a large catalpa tree in the front yard, and some of us children were playing under it. We heard a loud roaring sound nearby which was frightening because we had never heard anything like that around our house before. I remember someone yelling, "Look, it's a flying boxcar." Within about three or four years there was a small landing area cleared near Forest Hill, and small planes became rather common.

The land was cleared for farming on all sides of the house, with only a lane that led to the gravel road. One day mama and the older children were out in the front area poisoning potato bugs with arsenic mixed with flour, and they left some of the mixture in a paper bag on

a low shelf. Herbert and I discovered it, and I tasted some of it. It did not have the familiar taste of flour, so I told Herbert that it did not taste right and got him to taste some of it. While we were doing this, Essie Dee came by and saw us eating the flour, and she began to yell,"Mama, Richard and Herbert have been eating arsenic." Mama came running, and she was not one for taking half-way measures. She quickly put some grease on the stove to melt it, and in the meantime, she got some soapy water and forced us to drink it. We started vomiting, but she didn't stop until we had drunk the warm grease as well. As I remember, she even made us drink some salty water. We were not sick when she started in on us, but we were certainly sick when she finished. But we never felt any ill affects from the arsenic.

Mama was a real pioneer woman, and as the depression tightened its grip on us, she demonstrated again and again that there was little that she could not do. She had a shoe last which could be fitted to different sized shoes, and she could put heels on shoes or half-soles whenever needed. She could make dresses and shirts, and even pants for the boys. She made quilts with beautiful patterns. Later most of our clothes where made from printed flour sacks. She would make yellow soap by taking hog fat and boiling it in lye, or even boiling it in ashes if she had no money to buy lye. The soap she produced would take the skin right off your hand if you tried to use it to wash with. She would put dirty and soiled clothing into a huge pot and boil them in that yellow soap, and agitate the clothing by punching them with a broom handle. I have always felt that if my mother had been born in modern times, and had had the opportunity for an education, there would not have been any limit to what she could have accomplished.

We were at Uncle Charlie's place about two years when Grandpa Young died and left us a small inheritance. Dad used that to buy seven acres adjoining the place we were living, and he was able to get the lumber from Grandpa Young's old house to build us a house to live in. Dad constructed it easily and quickly, but it was not fancy.

The house had only four rooms for our family of nine. Mom and Dad had a bedroom with a large standing closet, and a fireplace. The chimney (we pronounced it chimbley) was made of mud and straw mixed, which was put in place between slats. The chimney caught fire several times while we were there, but fortunately, the house never burned. A double bed and a dresser completed the furniture in their room. The floor was barren wood.

The boys' room was the simplest constructed of all. We had no furniture in it, except for the two double beds. We had a large built-in closet where our clothes and quilts were kept.Some of my happiest memories of that room was when the rain would be pounding on the tin roof above with no dividing ceiling to moderate the sound, There is no sound on earth better for sleeping.

All outside walls, and the dividing walls inside were only one plank thick. We had no doors inside, only openings covered with cloth curtains. No room had a ceiling except the girl's room. The girls had one glass window, but all the other windows of the house were wooden casements, hung by hinges either on the vertical side, or in the case of the kitchen window, hung by hinges at the upper horizontal side. None of the rooms had screens for mosquitos or flies.

We used mosquito netting at night, and sometimes it got awfully hot under those nets with neither air conditioning nor electric fans.

In the kitchen was a wood stove where Mama did the cooking. Usually either Wallace or I would gather wood for the stove from woods across the gravel road. We would look for oak trees that had fallen, or for limbs that had not rotted. We would either chop them in pieces of about fourteen inches in length, or if the wood had been softened with age, we would break them in pieces with the axe. There were plenty of pine knots to use for kindling. We would use red oak or scrub oak for the fireplace, and as the fireplace never required a lot of use, there was never any scarcity of wood.

We had a long table in the kitchen with benches on either side, and chairs at the end. When we ate our meals, the children would sit on the benches and Mama and Daddy at the ends. The children had aluminum plates to eat from, but our parents had glass plates. We used the same table to study our lessons in the evening and we used coal oil lamps for light. When we lit up the fireplace, we would often go in that room to read by its light, as it gave more light than the lamp.

Behind the kitchen we had an uncovered back porch, and a shelf on the edge of it to hold the water bucket and a basin for water. We all drank from the same dipper, and never thought anything of it. Dad would shave there in the basin, but its most frequent use came from our washing our hands and faces in it. Our water well was near the front of the house on the right side. It was about thirty or forty feet deep. We drew water up with a long bucket tied to a rope, and this rope was over a pulley. The bucket had a trap at the bottom that closed when the bucket was drawn upward. The trap was released to allow the water to run into the wooden bucket which we then carried to the back porch. We had an outdoor toilet about thirty yards behind the house, with one large hole, and one smaller one cut into it. We used catalog paper for toilet paper. The front porch was covered, and it had a couple of rocking chairs on it, but we never used the front porch much as we had very little time for resting.

I do not recall ever seeing a doctor during the eight years we lived there. It was not that we were all that healthy, but we probably could not have afforded a doctor even if we had serious need of one. I remember many illnesses such as pink-eye (conjunctivitis), whooping cough, and flu, but most often our physical troubles came from getting nails in our feet, or cut by glass, or sticks under our finger nails. Mama could take care of most of our troubles, but I remember her skills being really tested by an outbreak of boils. Even her best poultices did not do what they were supposed to do.

We did not know much about hygiene except that we were strictly taught to keep our bodies clean. Mama would never allow any dirt into the house; in fact she would never let us in if we were the least bit dirty. Our clothes got very dirty out on the farm, but we could not come in until we were clean. As far as I can remember, none of us ever brushed our teeth until our sisters took a course in home economics in school and were taught that they were supposed to. I think that I must have been about fifteen when I first brushed my teeth, and then I used

soda for toothpaste. Yet I have always had strong healthy teeth, and even at my present age of 70, dentists remark on how strong my teeth are. I believe this can be attributed to good water and healthy food that we ate.

Our house sat near the west boundary of our property, facing north toward the road which was about one block's distance. Our barn was near the boundary on the other side, and slightly forward of our house. It was surrounded by a fence in which we kept our pigs, and our horse. We would feed the pigs with slop, or left-over food, until a few weeks before slaughter, at which time we would feed them something more substantial.

Our field extended nearly a quarter of a mile to the rear toward the creek, but it was narrow since we owned only about seven acres. In addition, we rented fifteen acres contiguous to the rear part of our property. Mostly, this rented property was one huge hill with either barren clay or poor soil, so it did not produce a lot for us. However, our own land was rather fertile.

We raised several kinds of crops on our farm, but mostly they were food crops. We always had some land allotted to com, sweet potatoes, irish potatoes, peanuts, fields peas, and sugar cane. In addition, we grew strawberries, pumpkins, melons,and beans. Mama never failed to raise a garden with such things as eggplant, turnips, mustard greens, collards, pepper, tomatoes, Kentucky Wonder pole beans, onions, and English peas. One year we tried to raise tobacco, but it did not work out: it had a very strong taste. All this time, Dad placed a good deal of confidence in the County Agent's advice with this one exception: Dad always believed that everything ought to be planted according to the phase of the moon which he determined from the Almanac. We raised some cotton several years to sell, but never made much from it. However, Mama did use it for quilts.

Fall was my favorite time of the year, not only because the severe heat of the summer began to moderate, but also because this was the time for gathering the harvest. Peanuts were one of our major crops since we peddled parched peanuts in town and were able to make some money to buy things we could not raise. We would pull the peanuts up from the sandy soil when they were mature, and let them remain in the field about three days to dry before bringing them in on our sled. (We had no wagon, but rather a simply constructed horse-drawn sled with a two-by-four plank on either side for it to slide over the ground.) Near our barn we would have round platforms constructed about ten feet in diameter, with a permanent pole rising vertically at the center. We would stack the peanuts around the outer boundary of the platform with the bushy part outward, and gradually slant the stack to the center until it met the pole. Then we would rig some kind of covering for the top. We would have several such stacks each year. Before winter, what remained of the stacks would be transferred to the 10ft of the barn.

Field peas that were not eaten would be allowed to dry, and then placed in large piles on a sheet. They would be beaten with a broom until the hulls separated from the peas, and then scooped up in the air and allowed to fall. The wind would blow the hulls away, and only a pile of peas would be left.

Sweet potatoes would be laid on beds of straw out in the open until the pile would be two or three feet high, then covered with straw. Boards would be placed over the piles in such a way as to prevent water from entering. Then the whole bank would be covered with dirt to keep the boards in place, and to offer further protection from the cold. To get to the potatoes, we would dig through the bank at the bottom, use the potatoes as we needed them,and leave the bank intact until all the potatoes were gone from it. We seldom had any potatoes protected in this way to rot.

Irish potatoes, like com, were preserved by laying them out on the floor of the bam. However, there always was a problem with rotting potatoes, and unless we were careful to remove any potato that was cut or "that had already begun to rot, soon the whole lot of them would be rotten.

Mama was big on canning. She canned peaches, pears, watermelon rind preserves, vegetables of all kinds, various kinds of soups, chow-chow made from green tomatoes, bell peppers and onions, and jellies made from black berries, plums, may halls, quince, and strawberries. In winter and in summer our food supply was more than adequate.

However, we were always low on protein consumption. We had little milk, and no cheese. In the fall, during hog-butchering time, we would have pork, but it did not keep well. We had a smoke house and smoked ham and bacon, but this never lasted more than a few weeks. Meat eating season would be prolonged a bit by different farmers butchering at different times and sharing, but this did not help to lengthen the time a lot. During the winter, we would trap rabbits, and my oldest brother Robert would do a good bit of squirrel hunting, and that helped. Also we raised chickens, and occasionally Mama would kill one of them for dinner. In summer we caught some fish at the local streams, but this turned out to be more for recreation than for food. I do not think that I have caught more than four or five fish in my lifetime.

During this period of my life, about the only things we had to buy were coffee, sugar, flour, kerosene, matches, spices, and some clothes. I do not remember our ever buying school supplies. Books were "free, but other than that, we made do the best we could. For meal we would take com to Mr. Gile's blacksmith shop and have him grind it, and he would keep one fifth for his part. Sometimes we had a cow that afforded us milk and butter, but most usually, we did not have a cow during this time. Mama made some of our clothes from flour sacks, and she was good at it, but they always looked home-made, and largely we were ashamed of our clothes.

During the winter when I was in the fifth grade, I had to walk to LeCompte to peddle peanuts, and I had no shoes. The winters in Louisiana are not usually bitter cold, but that year there was some ice on the ground, and my feet were very cold. A lady came out of Sample's Drug Store and saw me, and she insisted on taking me down to Hardy's Drygoods Store and buying me some shoes. I asked for a size larger than I wore, because I knew that Wallace did not have any shoes either, and his feet were larger than mine. I planned for him to get some use out of them too. I found out a few years ago that Miss Sample worked for a government agency,

and she had not personally been out for the cost of the shoes, but even so, I sure appreciated her help.

Our poverty during those years was of much embarrassment to me. It was reflected in our lunches we took to school: we always had enough to eat, but it was always a couple of biscuits with peanut butter and jelly, or potted ham.We made the peanut butter and jelly, but we had to buy the potted ham for about 5 cents a can, and one can was enough for several sandwiches. Also, we would at times take a sweet potato in our lunch bag, or an apple tart.

We never bought cold drinks at school, nor did we have anything to drink with our meals at home. I remember catching a ride once with a person who stopped for a cold drink, and he offered to buy me one. I really wanted it but I was too proud to accept it. I would not have known how cold drinks tasted if a truck of drinks had not overturned near our house, and we were able to get a few of those drinks.

The first time I tasted iced tea was at the CCC camp where Uncle Frank was stationed. My cousin Walter Valloton and I had walked several miles to see Uncle Frank and arrived just as they were finishing their meal. They offered us a plate, and we were glad to get it. We were really thirsty, and nothing ever tasted so good as that iced tea.

Another way our poverty showed was in our never being able to buy things that other kids had. I remember looking the school yard over for a pencil, and very often I had no pencil to write with. I never had a comb, and tried to borrow combs from classmates. Once I asked Vernon Perry, "Do you have a comb?" and he said, "Yes, for my own use." I never forgot that put-down.

Very often a show would come to the school, and school would let out a little early so kids could see the show before the school busses ran. The only catch was that the shows usually cost from 5 cents to a quarter, and I never had that kind of money. I remember many times when Wayne Cook and I, and perhaps another one or two, would have to sit in the room with the teacher while all our classmates got to go to the show. Sometimes they would let us go free at the half-time to see the end of the show.

Another way our poverty showed was during picture taking time. The photographers always took my picture along with every body else, and they let me view them when they were returned. But that was as far as it got. I never was able to buy any of my school pictures. Only recently was I able to borrow a couple of group pictures taken during school days, and have copies made. These are the only pictures of myself I possess that I had taken at that time.

During those years, Dad got a job on the WPA. He had to walk several miles to work before daylight, and then walk home in the evening, and he worked on this about three days a week. The money he earned there, and the money we received from our sale of peanuts and other things we peddled, was barely enough to keep us going.

There was just one other instance that I remember the government offering any help. It was about the year that 1 was in the sixth or seventh grade that government commodities began to appear in the form of canned meat. We really had just about all the food we needed, and it tore at our pride to have to accept government help, so we resisted taking these commodities. I do remember us once taking some canned beef, and it tasted pretty good. Other than that time, I do not remember receiving any free food.

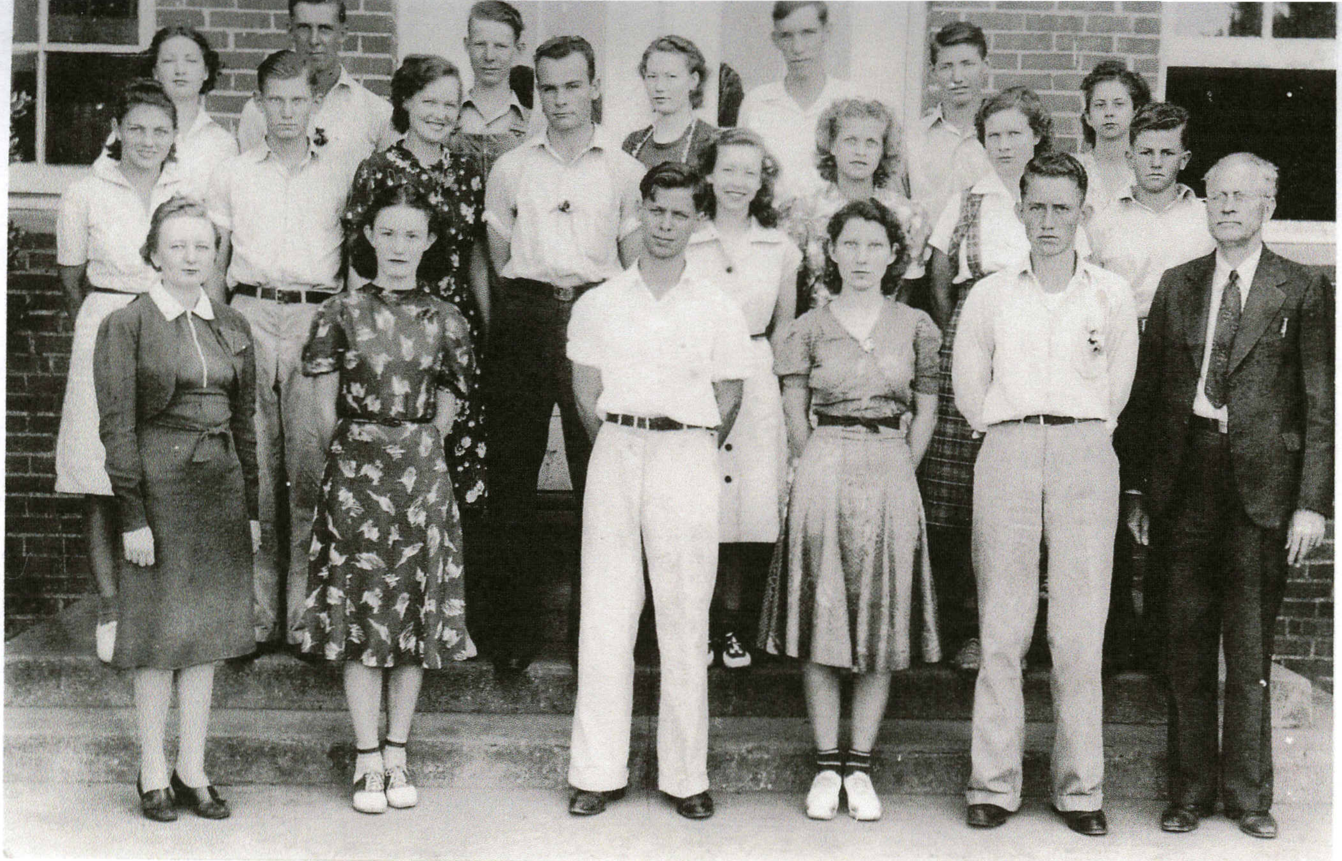
Underneath all my bad feelings about our poverty was a sense of pride in my ability. In the third grade the teacher had given a cut-out puzzle of a geometrical design to all the students, and offered a sucker to the first to put it together. I immediately put it together, but thought it was too easy and thus must not be the right solution so I did not raise my hand. After looking at it a little longer, I decided it must be right, so I raised my hand. Sure enough, I won.

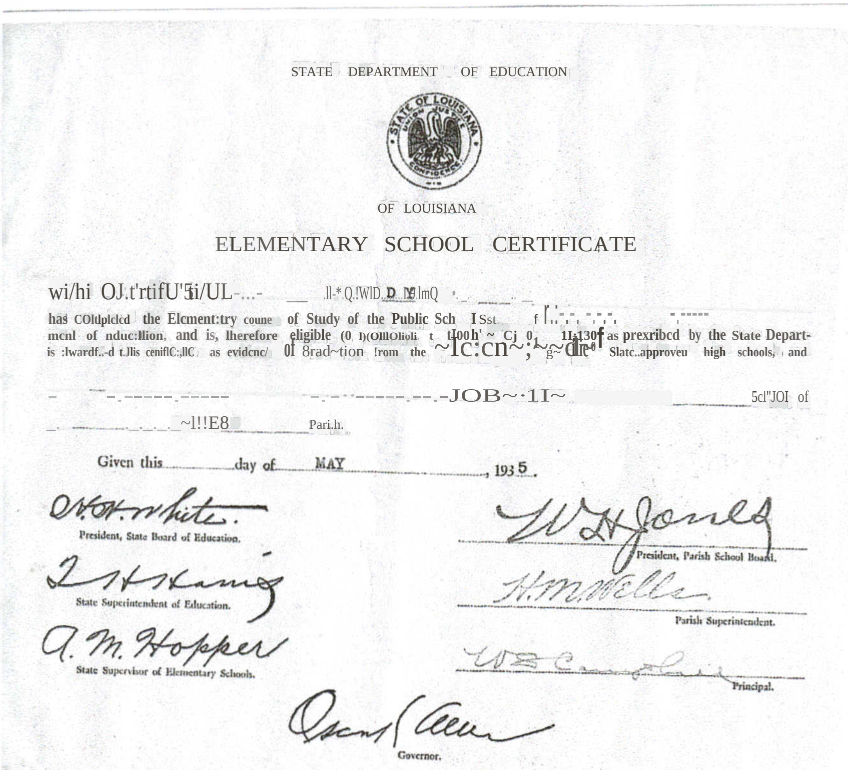
My confidence was further bolstered in the seventh grade when the teacher asked me to take over the history class for her while she had to be out. At home the only book we had was a history book, and I read it from cover to cover with great interest. I must have impressed her with my knowledge of the subject, because she never trusted any other students in this manner.

My favorite subject in high school was math, and I always made an A until I hit geometry. I simply could not get the hang of it at first. Then one day we were assigned a problem for homework, and I worked it out in only three simple steps. The teacher asked if anyone had worked it, and again, I was afraid that my work was wrong so I said nothing. So he put the answer on the board and. it turned out to be about eight steps. After the class, I took my work up to him, and I said that if he could show me where I had done it wrong I would appreciate it. He looked at my work with surprise, and said that I had it absolutely correct, and much better than his. The next day he put my work on the board for all to see. From that time on, I made an A in geometry.

There were not many occasions for humor during those years, but I remember once we were butchering a hog, and Dad was telling us a story about a man called "Lying John Smith." He said that Lying John had once passed a house where a couple were sitting on the porch, and they called to him to come by and tell them a lie. He said he didn't have time because their neighbor down the road was seriously ill and not expected to live. The couple hurriedly got ready and went to see the neighbor, but found him hale and hearty. As Dad was telling us that, our neighbor John Henderson came by, and Dad asked him if he had killed any hogs. John said no, his only hog had been stolen. He said the thief took it so quickly that he left the shadow in place. I think it must have taken people with strong character to find something to laugh about during those times.

Before I was ten or eleven, I was not given hard work on the farm. Much of my work was to cut stove wood and bring it in, and do some hoeing, and other light work. But as I grew older, I was taught to plow, and do any' of the work that needed to be done. I began to plow when I was about twelve, and one of the things I plowed up at that time was a hollowed out





STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OF LOUISIANA

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

[illegible]
has completed the Elementary course of Study of the Public Schools [illegible] as prescribed by the State Department of Education, and is, therefore eligible [illegible] This certificate is awarded as evidence of graduation from the [illegible] State approved high schools, and
[illegible] School of
[illegible] Parish.

Given this .... day of MAY, 1935.

President, State Board of Education.

State Superintendent of Education.

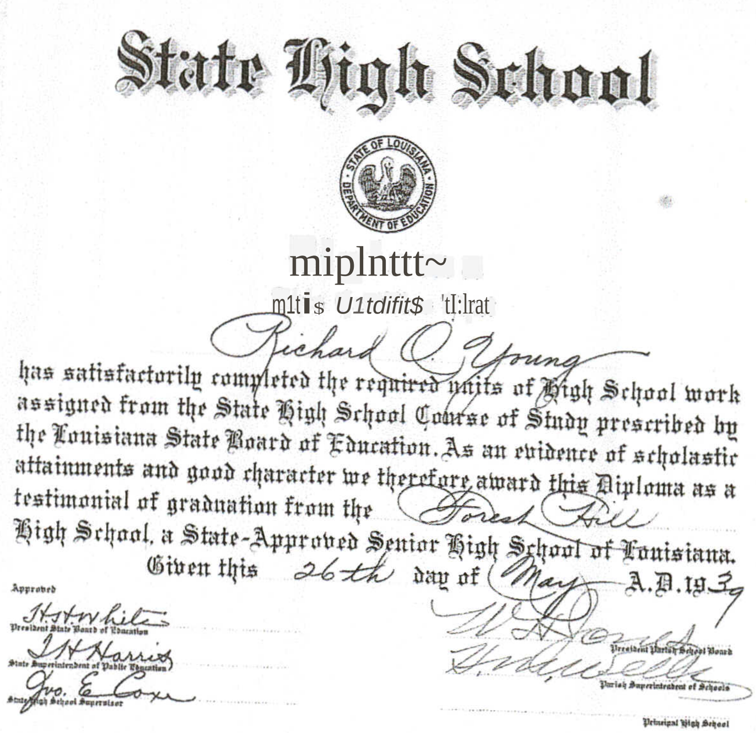
State Supervisor of Elementary Schools.

Governor.

President, Parish School Board.

Parish Superintendent.

Principal.



State High School

Diploma

This Certifies That

Richard O. Young

has satisfactorily completed the required units of High School work assigned from the State High School Course of Study prescribed by the Louisiana State Board of Education. As an evidence of scholastic attainments and good character we therefore award this Diploma as a testimonial of graduation from the Forest Hill High School, a State-Approved Senior High School of Louisiana.

Given this 26th day of May A.D. 1939

Approved

President State Board of Education

State Superintendent of Public Education

State High School Supervisor

President Parish School Board

Parish Superintendent of Schools

Principal High School

MY DAYS AT FOREST HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Above is the crowd with which I started in the first grade and went all the way through the eleventh grade to graduation. They are (Back row, L to R) Thelma Glass, Vernon Perry, Milfred Lampkin, Doris Williams, Odra Bailey, Richard Young, and Clara Chevalier; (Middle row) Bernice Laird, Wayne Cook, Mavis Perry, Wallace McGilray, Margery Chevalier, Sybil Bailey, Eddie Davenport, and Ivy Scott; (Front) our high school sponsor Miss Adams, Dorothy Scott, M. L. Ford, Eloise Butter, J. C. Carroll, and our Principal, Mr. Campbell.

stone that my dad said was probably used by Indians to grind meal. I have kept that stone through the years, and since my daughter Sally wanted it, I gave it to her a couple of years ago.

I really enjoyed plowing since I soon learned that the horse was doing most of the work if you did it right. I did not enjoy work where one had to stoop over, such as in berry picking or cotton picking. Most of my work was hoeing, which I did not greatly object to. Usually I had thick callouses on my hands as well as my feet. Wallace and I did quite a bit of wood-cutting and we even were able to sell some of the wood we cut for a dollar a rick (4 by 8 feet). Sometimes Dad would use pine poles for such things as rafters and beams if he was building something such as the barn or smokehouse, and we would have to cut the poles and peel the bark off to keep them from decaying. I still have the old bark-peeler, or "draw knife."

During school days, we usually did not have time to do much work in the morning before the bus came, especially in winter months. Actually, during that time, there was not much work we could do on the farm anyway, so most of our time was spent picking peanuts off the vines, or cutting wood. Sometimes this kind of work would continue until after dark, because darkness came early.On Saturdays, we would parch the peanuts and take them to town to selL During the spring, summer, and fall, we would work on the farm as soon as we got home in the afternoon. During the summer, when school was out, we would be up before daybreak to feed the horse and eat breakfast. We would begin work about 6, and work until 9, and then take about twenty minutes for a coffee break. Mama would blow the cow's hom for our signal to stop work. Nellie came to know the signal as well as we and could hear it better. If we happened to be plowing when the hom blew, she would immediately stop on hearing the hom. No amount of yelling at her would get her moving again until we had taken our break. We would stop at noon for lunch, and take an hour off, but would be back to work at one. At about three we would take another coffee break, and then work until about six. Sometimes, if work needed to be done, we would go back to work after supper and work until dark.

We also raised strawberries to sell, but we usually sold them beside the road. We had a stand that Dad had built, and we could get under its roof during the rain, but we would usually stand out in front and hold up a tray of berries for people to see when they came driving by. I believe that we got 5 cents per quart for the berries .

.One thing I hated doing more than any other was peddling. Mostly our peddling was during the early spring when we carried beans to LeCompte, and sold them house to house. I remember losing a quarter one time, and could not account for it when I returned home. So Wallace and I took a lantern and went back to LeCompte, and retraced my steps. We found the quarter beside the street. This was about an eight mile hike for just a quarter, but still we felt jubilant when we found it.

During the years we lived in that place, we had one fairly regular visitor: Uncle Jim. Uncle Jim was Dad's youngest brother, and he was not much on working. We were told that Grandpa Young had sent him to college (none of his other children got to go) but Uncle Jim lasted for only about one year. He went out west for a while, and when he came back, he

claimed that he had held a job as an efficiency engineer. The main thing he was effecient at was avoiding work. He would stay with us about two weeks until our hints were getting pretty direct that he ought to help us out, and then he would move on to stay with another member of the family. By the time he got back around to us, he was ready to begin the cycle of laziness all over agam.

Uncle Jim liked to argue. He believed he knew just about everything, and he seemed to look with a kind of disdain on the simple people who lived in our community. I remember him once at our house arguing with one of the Neal girls, who was really very pretty and would have been a good catch for him. But he made her so angry that she used some of the first curse words I ever heard. She said, "You can go to hell." As far as I know, she never talked to Uncle Jim again. Uncle Jim explained his being a bachelor in this way: he said that it was like going down a row of roses and to keep saying, "there will be a prettier one a little further on." He said that he had just about run out of roses. I wondered if he had ever found any that would have taken him. However, he did get married a little later in life, and he raised one child

I remember being up on the hill of our rented property hoeing peas one day, and thinking about the people who had committed suicide because of the depression. I had a hard time understanding how anyone could feel that bad about not having a lot of money . We had no money at all, and yet life seemed so very bright and full of promise to me. I remember thinking that if only some of those folks could come out and live on the farm with us, they might begin to see things differently.

I worked outside our home for wages several times. Once I worked all day at George Bailey's place loading hay on to a wagon, and then unloading it into a bam. The hay was soy bean bushes, of the climbing or running variety. A fork load of that hay was not simply a fork load; the load would be bound to a long stream of soy bean vines. To take a pitch-fork of that hay and throw it up on the wagon or into the 10ft was an extremely hard task. I worked ten hours at that job in the hot Louisiana sun, and was paid one dollar. Another day, Robert Bonial asked me to help him work all day cleaning up the LeCompte cemetery, and he promised me a dollar for the work. When we finished working, he took me by his house and measured out a bushel of sweet potatoes for me. I had no earthly use for sweet potatoes, and told him he promised me a dollar. He said he was paying me "in kind." I felt he had tricked me, but my parents told me to accept it. Several times during the fall of one year, I think the year was about 1936, the Poole brothers brought their truck through our community and picked up anybody who wished to pick cotton. All of the children in our family went, and for several days we would go to the flat bayou region near Cheneyville to pick cotton. Try as hard as I could, I never could pick as much as 200 pounds in one day, and at one cent a pound, the earning was not great. One black lady had hands that moved like lightning: she picked nearly 600 pounds in one day.

My life was bound up very much during those years with our horse Nellie. We used her for plowing and hauling, and she was a vital part of our farm life. But more than that, after I was given the saddle by Grandpa Austin, I rode her at every opportunity.

Very little of the riding I did was involved with farm work: most of it was for fun. However, I do remember trying to take our cow to the dipping vat to rid her of ticks. We tried to separate her from the other cows by getting behind her and chasing her. This did not work well, so I looped the rope around the cow's neck and tied one end to the saddle hom. But this didn't work well either; the cow took off running, the under girth broke, and both the saddle and I were parted from Nellie's back.

I had several horse-back trip experiences after I got to be around fourteen. Once I rode down to Grandpa Austin's landing, and I did not start to return until late in the afternoon. It soon started raining, and we had to plod along because the road was slippery. Darkness caught us before we were able to get through the swamp on the way home, and it was so dark that I could not see my hand before my face. I let the reigns go loose, and bent my head close to the saddle hom so that limbs would not catch me in the face. Nellie plodded along for what seemed an eternity, and finally we reached the clearing outside the swamp.

On another trip which I took in the winter time, I went through the woods to see Uncle Fayette and Aunt Zelma who then lived near Meeker. I did not know the way past Marshall Creek, but Robert told me how the road would fork beyond the creek, and I was to take the right fork. The distance was about four or five miles through the woods but would have been about seven miles around the road. My only trouble on that trip was that my hands got so cold they became numb, because I had neither gloves nor mittens. I got to the point where I really had to use the bathroom, and I was able to unbutton the fly by simply pulling it apart. Try as I did, I could not rebutton it. I had to back into the house when I finally got to Uncle Fayette's.

Another time, my cousin Tommy Austin and I were going near that same way again, and we spotted an old cemetery that was covered over with trees and vines. The fence around it seemed to be made of high quality iron, but the vines were matted all through it, and the fence mostly was on the ground or raised up unevenly by the vines. We quickly went over the fence, and inside the tombstones were made of better material than those in Pisgah's grave yard at home which were made of cement. We looked at the names on the tombs, and I remembered one name which seemed very peculiar to me, the name Moses. I did not know any people at all by that name, and the only place I had ever heard of it was in the Bible. I have remembered that name through the years,

Recently ,in the fall of 1992, Mr. Richard Kent and his wife Ursula who are members of the Amite-Arcola Presbyterian Church, visited a cemetery near Meeker where some of her relatives were buried. Ursula told about how far back in the woods it was, and said that it had an iron fence around it which had fallen over and had vines intettwined in it, but it had been restored by one of her kinspeople. I said that it sounded much like the old cemetery I had seen as a boy. I said that I still remembered a name in it, the name Moses. Mr. Kent really laughed, and he said there was no Moses buried in that cemetery. A little later Mrs. Kent was showing Madge a picture of the restored tombs, and Madge called out to me, "Come look." The name on the first tomb pictured was "Moses Compton."

Our brother Robert played a very large part in my life during this time. Dad had gotten a job on the Works Program Administration, which paid barely enough for a poor family to subsist on, but required him to walk several miles each day to work, and then work long hours. While he was gone, Robert was put in charge of the work on the farm. Robert was somewhat cocky: he believed he could handle just about any situation. Once on the fourth of July, Grandma Laura was visiting us, and Robert did not like her. When Robert came home from LeCompte, he saw Grandma». sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch, and he had in a sack what appeared to be a huge fire-cracker. In fact, it was so large that it looked like a bomb. Robert pretended to be drunk: after staggering around, he took the firecracker from his bag, lit the fuse, and put it under her rocking chair. He was much amused at her reaction. On another occasion, one of the Johnson girls came by our house about twilight, and she stayed until after dark. Then she wanted Robert to walk her home. He found some excuse for not going. Later it was determined that she was pregnant, and Robert still believes that she was trying to set him up as being the father. The real father of the child was already married.

One of the dearest and most beloved of our siblings was Ruby, our older sister. She was very frail, and always easy going. I do not believe that she ever gave anyone any trouble, and she did an awful lot of the work around the house. Essie Dee was more outgoing and vivacious, and probably much prettier. The boys really liked Essie Dee from the time she was about fourteen, but Ruby never seemed to have a date or get along with boys. Then one day a handsome young man named Richard Polakovich came from Michigan to live with the Townsends, and he began to visit our house pretty often. All of us assumed that he had his eye on Essie Dee, but we were wrong. He really liked Ruby, and he married her before she got out of high school.

Ruby and Richard married during the height of the depression, and they had absolutely nothing to start with, except Richard's determination to make a go of it. At first they went to live on Grandpa Austin's place on the lake, and they lived in a little house that was something like a camp. Richard tried to make a living catching fish, but he did not do very well. He could not find a proper job, and finally went to Detroit to work in the factories. He had to leave Ruby alone all day and she became so lonely she could not stand it, so they came back soon after Lillian was born. Then Richard began to work for Poole Brothers' Nursery as a laborer, and from that start he eventually became a prosperous nurseryman.

During that part of our lives we had very little relationship with anyone of the black race. They were universally known as "niggers," and universally looked down on as inferior. Sometimes we would see negro women who lived in the "quarters" about two miles west of us pass our house walking to or from leCompte. Sometimes they would have a basket on top of their heads, and they would be dressed in colorful clothes. On Saturday evenings there would always be large crowds of them in LeCompte from the plantations, and often they would have fights. We would hear of them being cut by razor blades in these fights, but the fights would always be between black and black. When they were put in jail, the owner of the plantation would come to get them out. Actually they were treated very much as the slaves had been treated before the Civil War; only now they were held in bondage by the owner of the plantation

keeping them in debt.

During our last couple of years in our house in Midway, Essie Dee (my next older sister) became involved with the National Youth Association (NYA), and she was made recreation director for our community. The NYA gave her several games to keep, such as croquette, and bats and balls. We put them out in front of the house on the grassy lawn, and we never lacked for young people around our house after that. One game we had played a good deal was dominoes, and another game we liked was checkers. Mama did not oppose our playing these games. But Wallace and I were beginning at that time to learn how to play cards, and she was opposed to that. Once Wallace, Osburn Johnson, and I took the lantern down in the cornfield after dark, and played a game of 42. We were not caught, but we did not do that again. Most usually we played dominoes.

About that time many of the people in the community got together to build a community center where people could dance, and perform other community activities. Mr. Townsend, who lived next to us, donated the land for the building, so it was built near enough to us that we could hear the music of the fiddles and the guitars. People really had good times at that place, and as far as I know, no religious people ever opposed it being there. Nearly every Saturday night there would be a drawing for prizes, and once I won. It was nothing more than an apple and a couple of bananas, but to me, it was something pretty big.

It was also about this time also that Huey P. Long came to our community to make a speech. I was in LeCompte on that day peddling peanuts, so I did not get to witness it, but when I came home I was told that Long had gotten up on a truck in our lawn and had given a speech to the whole community. They said hundreds of people were there, and many of the farmers argued with Long, but he knew how to win them over. Most of us had great respect for Long because of his part in providing free school books which enabled those of us who were so very poor to go to school. He also helped provide for free hospital care, and for better roads and bridges. Many people felt that he was personally dishonest, and somewhat dictatorial, but they were willing to overlook those faults because of the benefits he provided. When he was shot at the new state capital building, prayer meetings were held in our community as well as over the state for his recovery, but all to no avail.

Dad's ambition had been to build a proper home for the family, and little by little he had saved enough to get started on it. The first thing he did was to obtain some large pine logs which we peeled. Dad used the foot adze to cut pieces from the logs to make them fit as beams to undergird the house. He was able to buy fairly good second hand lumber, and within a few months, he had his dream house well underway. About that time, the Missionary Baptist Church had purchased an acre or so from the Fowlers on our west side, and so the place was really beginning to build up. Then, like a bolt from the blue, Dad said that he had been offered twenty five acres in the lower community for our seven, and he had decided to take it. Instead of moving to our dream house (I am not so sure that it was that much of a dream), we went to live in the older house belonging to Paul Lamkin in the lower community, at the end of the road.

ADDENDUM

I am writing this addendum because after I had finished this chapter, and Madge had read it, she became very depressed. It seems to be her estimation that my childhood must have been exceedingly unhappy. Nothing could be further from the truth. The story format I am using makes it easy to tell only those experiences which bring out certain themes such as poverty. But my main memories of my earliest days are about a large and happy family, with the community being a kind of extended family. I have failed to tell of running down by the creeks with my friends, or skinny dipping in the swimming hole, and the girls hiding our clothes. Nor did I tell of laying out under the warm night skies and looking at the brightly shining stars, and thinking about the vastness of space. These, a thousand other pleasant experiences, and even the hardships we suffered, made my childhood a wonderfully happy time that I would not trade with anyone I know. .

CHAPTER *N*

THE LOWER COMMUMTY

The house to which we moved was much more commodious and elaborate than the one we left. It was not painted, but it did have several glass windows. One room, on the east side of the house, was almost surrounded by windows, and that room went to Essie Dee and Jewel, because by this time Ruby had married Richard Polakovich, the orphan boy who had moved down from Michigan to live with our next door neighbors, the Townsends. On the west side of the house was the boys' room, and mostly it was for Herbert, Wallace and me because Robert had already been in the CCC camp and was mostly working away from home. Dad and Mom had the large room in the center which also served as a sitting room. Behind that was the kitchen. We still did not have electricity or running water in the house, but the rooms all had inner walls, and there was a ceiling overhead.

The place was much larger than our old place had been, but we did not farm all the land we had. We owned several acres across the gravel road from our house, but we never did farm any of it. However, it did afford us with much stove wood, and later Robert built his first house on part of it.

The soil on the whole was better suited for farming than where we had been before; it was not so steep that water made gullies through it after it rained. Behind the field in back of us was an old log cabin that was well constructed, and since we had no one living in it, we used it for a barn. However, the Melton family needed a place to live, and they did come there to live for awhile.

By now I was getting to be a teenager, and to have the interests that teenagers normally have. I really wanted to date a girl, but I was always too shy to ask, or to get started. When I was about fifteen or sixteen, I was talking to Robert about my problem and he said that the trouble was that I only wanted to date the prettiest girls. They, he said, were the hardest to get started with. He suggested that I find one not so pretty and try her first. About that time the Haney family moved to the community, and they had an extremely unattractive daughter: she was tall and thin, and had a long neck with a large Adam's apple. About the only thing that young people did for entertainment in those days was to walk to church or revival meetings when such meetings were held. At that time there was a Pentecostal revival meeting under an arbor in the upper community, and I asked the Haney girl if she would walk with me to the meeting. She said yes, so that was to be my first date. At the meeting that evening, all the other young people of the community were there, and they were really taken by surprise to see me with someone. I heard them snickering, and saw them looking back at us all during the service.! walked the girl home that night after the service, but I had gotten absolutely no joy from the experience. That was the last date I had as a teenager at home, and in fact, I never again dated another girl in the area. Older brothers do not always give good advice.

During that period in our life we did not do quite so much peddling as we did before,

because we did not live next to the road between Foreest Hill and LeCompte, but we still continued to take some vegetables and parched peanuts to LeCompte to sell. Wallace and I began to earn most of our money by cutting wood and selling it. We got one dollar a rick, which was four feet high and eight feet long. We used a cross-cut saw to cut down the trees, and cut them up in the right length blocks, and then we split the blocks with our axes. It was hard work and put thick callouses on our hands. We were still very poor, and could not afford gloves, even during the cold. I remember that my hands would often hurt from the cold, especially when we would stop for a minute to warm our hands by a fire.

It was during this time, when I was about 15, that I had a strange experience. Uncle Jake Mason, who had married the half sister of my grandmother Austin, had come back from many rovings about, and had again established cohabitation with Aunt Donie. They were by now in their late seventies,and they were living in an old house back on the edge of a swamp. The house at one time had been a two-storied mansion, with two rows of planted cedar trees leading up to it, but ever since the Civil War it had been deserted and the upstairs part was unusable. Along the front of the house there was a huge porch, with shutters that reached from the floor up nearly to the top of the high ceiling. Uncle Jake and Aunt Donie only used a part of the downstairs. One day while Tommy Austin was visiting with us, we heard that Uncle Jake was ill, and Mama wanted Tommy and me to go down and stay a few days with them to help take care of Uncle Jake. When we got there, we learned that Uncle Jake's trouble was simple; he had not used the toilet in two weeks. I suggested all the usual remedies, but he said he had tried them all. Finally, I asked him to let me fix him something that I thought would work, and he promised to try it. I filled a glass about half full of epsom salt, and finished filling it with warm water. I stirred it until almost all the epsom salt was dissolved, and gave it to him to drink. It worked. Uncle Jake was an extremely obese man, and to put it delicately, he filled a slop jar almost full.

The last night that Tommy and I were there, we heard a loud screaming noise in the woods, and it sounded much like a baby crying. Uncle Jake said that it was a panther that had been hanging around. Uncle Jake then took this occasion to tell us several ghost stories which he swore were true. Just before we went to bed that night, a lot of bats came flying in one of the windows, and Aunt Donie took a broom and chased them out. The room that Tommy and I had been sleeping in was next to the large front porch, and that night we had a hard time going to sleep. Finally we dropped off, but sometime during the night, probably about one o'clock, one of the huge shutters near our bed fell out on to the front porch. Tommy and I sat up in bed, and looked at one another. He said, "Let's go." I said, "Fine." We quickly put on our clothes, grabbed a flashlight, said a quick good-bye to Aunt Donie who came to see what was wrong, and we left. I think we ran all the way through the swamp until we reached the hill on the other side.

I was painfully shy all during high school, and I would never have entertained the idea of speaking to a girl other than some girls in the community who were just like sisters, When I was asked to recite poetry, or to speak in class, I would tum red, and couldn't get a word out.

One of my most embarrasssing experiences was during the junior prom. We had a kind of banquet where we were supposed to entertain the seniors, and I was seated next to our class sponsor, Miss Adams, who was also our English teacher. I watched everyone very carefully so I could tell which utensil to use, and everything went all right until I came to the pickle on my plate. Should I pick it up with my fingers, or should I use my fork to lift it, or should I cut it up? I decided to cut it, but the knife was very dull and not made for cutting pickles. I thought I was holding the pickle securely with my fork, when all at once it slipped loose, and went shooting across my plate to hit other food there and knocking everything out on the table. I tried to sneak it all back on my plate but I believe everybody must have been watching me.

During my last year in high school, Wallace attended Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette, and that left me without the steady work companion I had during my growing up. Wallace had no money; but he paid for his education by working for the school dairy. He would have to get up at four every morning and begin his work, and he had very little time for study. About every second or third weekend, he would hitchhike home. For hitch-hiking purposes he wore his "beanie" with S.L.!. written on it. He also had a huge logo of S.L.1. on his suitcase. He never had any trouble getting rides.

Once during his freshman year, he had an attack of appendicitis at school, and had to have an operation. I had been wanting to hitch-hike down to see him for a long time, but the farthest I had been away from home was to Alexandria, less than 20 miles away. Finally I persuaded my parents to let me go, and I also used one of Wallace's logos on my suitcase. I started early in the morning, but rides were hard to come by on that day. Finally, I came to Sunset, about 30 miles from Lafayette, and I got stuck there. The sun was going down, and at a honky tonk across the road they were playing, "And tbe funny ole hills sing back and say, Ladee, O Ladee, O Ladee, O Lay." And I got so homesick that I could hardly stand it. Just about then a large van stopped that had a group of young men nearly my age, and one a little older driving. The driver asked me if I was a student at S.L.!., and I told him the truth; I wasn't. I told him that my brother Wallace was a student and that he was ill. The man asked me if Wallace ever complained about a certain professor who, he said, was reported to be the meanest professor on the campus. I admitted that Wallace had spoken about him, but I couldn't remember anything bad he had said. It turned out that the driver was the professor, and all the students in the van knew Wallace. They drove me to the dormitory, and helped me get settled for the night.

While I was there, I stayed in the dormitory with Oliver Fowler, one of our distant cousins who lived at Midway. Oliver was going with a beautiful Cajun girl whom he later married and he asked me if I wanted to date his girl-friend's younger sister. I was glad to, but my experience with dating was practically nil, so I was a little nervous. My hair at that time was very unruly, so to prevent it from sticking up here or there, I really doused it with vaseline hair-tonic. I still remember feeling that oil run down my head and neck that evening. I didn't know much to talk about, and she asked me if I wanted to hear some music on the radio. I suggested the grand old opera. At that time, that kind of music was held in very low esteem except by country folk, and I suppose that it began to come out just how countrified I was. I do not believe I made a big hit.

That fall, Wallace talked me into going into a joint venture with him in growing beans for the market. He said that he could get money for the fertilizer and bean seed, and a down-payment on a used car, if I would do the work. Dad agreed to let me have a couple of acres for the project on a fertile hillside, and early in the spring of 1939 I planted the seed. I have never seen such healthy plants, nor so many beans produced per acre. I walked five miles to buy a second hand model A car that had a little truck built on the back, and without ever having driven a car before, I drove that car home. Of course, since it had a stick shift, I had a hard time getting it in the right gear, and as for guiding, I went from one side of the gravel road to another. Luckily, I did not meet much traffic, and I made it safely home. Within a short time I was regularly driving to Glenmora and Alexandria to deliver beans.

Picking the beans did not prove to be such a problem as I had feared. About that time, the Melton family hadto move from where they were, and Dad let them move into the log house that was on the back of our farm. The house had been made of good pine, and it had two large rooms. It was not fancy, but it was livable. The Meltons had several children, and they as well as the adults worked for me in picking those beans. Just about every day for several weeks I took a load of beans to town. I made enough to payoff the car, and to purchase my class ring, and a graduation suit. Also, Wallace received his fair share.

Our truck came to an ignominious end. I took Mama and Dad to see Uncle Fayette, about five miles' distance, and on the way there, I had a flat. No problem, I put on the spare. But then on the way home, after it was good and dark, I had another flat. The only thing to do was take off the spare, and ride on home on the rim. Coming down the hill toward the culvert at Bently Springs, I saw a car coming down the other hill toward us, and his lights were on bright. I reached up to flick our lights on bright to indicate I couldn't see, but undoubtedly, when I switched them off of bright, I switched them all the way off. I couldn't see anything. I hit the culvert squarely, and destroyed the engine of our truck. I also bloodied my nose, and shook up Dad and Mom. But none of us were seriously hurt.

Our senior class was to put on the annual play in the spring of 1939, and I had absolutely no talent to offer. However, not wishing to leave me out, the class asked me to have one line in the play, and I was supposed to tum on the radio. We were all used to a battery radio as none of us had electricity at home, and always the radio would come on immediately. But in the play, when I tried to tum it on, we used electricity, and there was a long pause after I said my line. I turned it up as loud as it would go, and still no sound. Milford Lamkin thought it was not working so he ad libbed,"The darned thing won't work," when all at once it blasted out.It brought down the house.

Not everything I did worked out, but one thing did, and that was my studies. I made better grades than any of the boys in the class, and even better than most of the girls. Only two, Doris Williams and Mavis Perry, were able to make a better grade point average. I won a scholarship to L. S. U. worth $ 40.00 but that was not near enough even then for college, and I had nothing else.

About two weeks before graduation they let the seniors out, and there were some pretty wild parties involving some of the seniors and their dates. One was to be a swimming party at Shady Nook, but as usual, I did not have the wherewithal to go. Milford Lamkin asked me to go with him, but I told him I had no swim suit, which was the truth. He said, "Shoot, I don't have one either, but I am going in with cut-off pants." I told him that I still didn't think I would go, and he said, "You'll be missing half your life." I did not tell him that I had no quarter for the cost, and that I really did feel like I was missing half my life.

About a week after graduation, some of the boys in Midway invited me to go to a fishing camp on the lake that belonged to one of the boy's grandfather who lived nearby. I was glad to go, and most of the evening we were rowing out in the flat bottomed boats and having a good time on the water. There came some heavy clouds and rain just as it was getting dark but we had some carbide lanterns to attach to our heads, so we did not have a big problem. Sometime later, two of my classmates, Odra Bailey and 1. C. Carroll, came driving up and Odra wanted to go out in the boat with me. I had known Odra all through school, and never knew that he drank, and he probably never had much to drink, but that night he had been drinking wine. I didn't even know the effects that liquor would have on a person, but I soon found out: Odra began to rock the boat.We were by now far out into the lake surrounded by cypress, and with darkness so heavy you could almost feel"it. Only the head lamp gave us light. I asked Odra to stop rocking the boat, but it got worse, and the boat began to fIll with water. I asked him to start dipping the water out, and he tried, but every time he would dip the bucket, he would sway the boat, and soon the boat went under and my light went out. This was "Cocodria" lake, which comes from the French word for crocodile, and I could imagine every thing I touched in the lake being a snake or alligator. We could not see our hands before our faces. We clung to a slippery log and began to yell at the top of our voices, and soon we saw a few head lamps coming through the cypress trees. They were a welcome sight.

I saw Odra a couple of times in 1991 when I was an interim pastor of the Trinity Presbyterain Church in Lafayette, La., and I asked him if he remembered that episode. He said that he did, and that he was very sorry that it happened. He said that that was one of the few times he ever drank. He is at this time a fine citizen in a town near Longview, Texas, and a deacon in the Primitive Baptist Church. J. C. Carroll married one of his sisters, and J. C. died earlier this year with cancer.

CHAPTER V

THECCC CAMP

During my senior year at Forest Hill, my cousin Tommy came to see me at school all decked out in his new uniform: he was in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). He told me that it was hard to get in but that I might qualify. The pay was only $30.00 monthly, and $22 of that must be sent home. But there was plenty to eat, and they furnished your clothes, so he thought it was a pretty good deal.

It was during this time that I was trying to decide what I wanted to do. I felt that I had a good mind, and I wanted to go to college, but I just did not have sufficient funds. I thought about going to S.L.I. as Wallace did, but Wallace discouraged me from doing that. He said that he had to get up and begin working in the school dairy farm at 4 am, and he never did have time for any social life, or even much time for study. He also told me that ffi) get in this program I had to major in agriculture, which I was sure I did not want to do. Also, Robert had entered a similar program in Nachitoches at the State Normal, and he quit after a week. He said that he would have to work knee-deep in cow manure, and he smelled bad even after taking a shower. He said that he was looked down on by the other students.

It was for such reasons as this that I decided to look into the CCC Camp as an alternative. I made an arrangement with Uncle Fayette McElwee that the $22 monthly would be sent to him, and it would be saved for my college education when I got out. I would also save all I could from the $8 monthly that I got. So I applied for the CCC and entered in June of 1939.

I was told to come to Camp Pollack about 20 miles north of Alexandria, and the first thing they did was to issue me a full wardrobe of clothing, including two sets of dungarees with pull-over jumpers, and two pairs of khakis, shoes, socks, towels, bedding, a canteen, metal plate with eating utensils, and a container for soap and a toothbrush. I was also assigned a bed in a barrack. Then they lined us up for an immunization shot.As I got near the place where the shot was administered, some of the men began to pass out, and fall down. I also got to feeling faint. I was lucky that an old schoolmate named Charlie Chevalier from Forest Hill was there; he kept me from falling.

I remember three different kinds of things I did during the hot summer of '39. One was to fight fires. Whenever a fire started anywhere in the woods, it would be sighted by several high fire towers, and by each of them taking a "fix" on its direction, they could determine exactly where it was. A group of about twenty of us would load on to a truck and quickly go to the spot. Most of us had rubber flappers to beat out the fire, but a couple of men would carry a tank of water on their shoulders which they would spray on the fire. If the fire got out of hand, more trucks would come, and sometimes it was necessary for tractors to plow deep furrows to contain the fires. Fighting fires in hot Louisiana during the summertime was a not a lot of fun.

Another work that we did as a part of our ordinary work day was to dig ditches and work

on roads. This was the hardest and hottest of all the work that I did. But by far the most time was spent in planting young pines. We would be given a large bundle of pines, about a foot or so in length, and we had a dibble with a blade about 10 inches long. We would maintain a distance apart from our other workers of about six feet. We would take two long steps, sink the dibble into the ground, push it back and forth a couple of times to open a hole, put the roots of the young plant in, strike the ground again with our dibble about three inches from the planting hole so that the hole would close up, and then move on to plant the next one.We were usually given a certain amount to plant, and if we got through before the end of the day, we could quit early.

This method of letting us get off early encouraged us to work faster, but it also encouraged us to cheat. I remember filling many stump holes with young trees, or otherwise hiding a few of them at the time under tall grass. It is easy in such settings to learn to goof off or to become less responsible.

One day I was to replace the look-out man on the fire tower, which was a much coveted job. It was a hard climb to the top; my guess is that it was more than a hundred feet because some trees in that area grow almost that tall. When I got to the top, the regular look-out asked me if I had brought along the sky hook, and I said no; I did not even know what it was. He told me to go back down and ask the man at the ground station for it. I went back down, and when I asked the man there, he died laughing; this was a joke that they played on all newcomers. Of course, I did not think it was all that funny, since I had to trudge all the way back up the tower.

The food at the camp was excellent; I probably ate as well as I ever ate in my life. Also, we would often have entertainment in the evening, such as a movie or boxing. In the morning we would fallout for reveille as in the army, and in the evening we would have retreat. In some ways this new life was a broadening and happy experience, and a certain amount of comradery was built up between us. The chief complaint I had during these first months was the hot dungarees that we had to wear. Since the jumpers were pull-overs, they could not be unbuttoned down the front for cooling. Not only that, they were full of blue dye, and they were long sleeved. I would become bathed with sweat, and the blue dye would run off on my skin. I was soon covered with heat rash, and it did not end until the dye was all washed out of my dungarees, and the weather became a little cooler.

Another real downer for me at first was homesickness. I had never been away from home to any extent, and I missed my family. Sometimes it was almost an aching feeling. Every week-end that I was not on duty I would hitch-hike home, and return on Sunday evening. In a way, I was beginning to understand that becoming a grown-up person meant that I was also entering a new kind of life that would be forever different from the one I left.

Even in the CCC camp I tried to further my education. I heard that there was to be a six-week typing course at Camp Beauregard near Alexandria, and I applied, and was accepted. I was somewhat disappointed in the way my schooling was carried out. I was placed in an office

where an army lieutenant and his secretary worked, given a typewriter and a set of instructions, and told to go through the exercises on that typewriter. Meanwhile, the two of them spent their days in some pretty heavy courting. 'I would get so tired of that typewriter day after day that I did not think I could stand it, and I thought that I was gaining no ground at all, but the lieutenant made me stick with it. At the time, it was extremely boring, but since that time, this rudimentary training became a real asset as it gave me a beginning in a skill that I have much needed and used.

When I returned to Pollack" there was no need for new people in the office, and besides, I had not really learned all that much about typing, so I went back to regular work. At that time there were no trees to plant, so they put me with a group of men who were making cement blocks. Two of the good friends I had there were Leon Racine, a Cajun from around Abbeville, and Floyd Wilson, from around Fariday. As we talked together, one of them told about some men who had transferred to a camp out west for a few months, and he talked about all the good times a person could have if they went west. The upshot of all this was that all of us working on the cement blocks applied, and were all accepted, to go to Nevada. We were to go right after Christmas, 1939.

The second six months of my CCC career was so much different from the first six months that it almost constituted a different kind of experience. A large group of us went on a passenger train with sleepers, and the trip in itself was very exhilarating. As we passed through Colorado, we saw large amounts of snow, and except for once or twice when we had had wet snow and it had melted within a day or two, this was just about the first snow I had ever seen. And the mountains were majestic, simply breath-taking. I do not believe I had ever seen such beauty. But the thing we began to feel most keenly was the cold. Whereas the summer of '39 in Louisiana was just about like living in an oven, we had now begun to feel the other extreme of a harsh winter

When we came to our destination, the place where we exited the train was named Gerlach, and we looked around in vain for a town. As I recall, there were only one or two structures there, and nobody at all that we could see; however, a few chickens at one of the houses told of some occupancy. Waiting for us were two or three CCC trucks with canvass tops. We sat on wooden benches for the thirty mile trip out to the camp, and the road was made of rocks and dirt. It was the kind of bumpy ride that you don't wish to take too often. Along the way we saw a few dry creek beds, and when we were near the camp, there was one larger bed, dry as well, that had a ranch house by it. That was the only sign of life we had seen in thirty miles. But the camp itself was a going concern. It not only had the usual buildings, but it also had many facilities that the Louisiana camp did not have. The reason for this was there was absolutely no way that a person could get to a town for any service that a town offered. You got it at the camp, or you didn't get it.

In Louisiana we had been accustomed to trees of all kinds: large oaks, tall pines, ash, gum, walnut, hickory, and many others, as well as all kind of bushes and underbrush. In that

lonesome place, there were no trees anywhere to be seen, except for the short juniper trees up on the mountain sides. All around us there was the dull sage brush. It grew about five to eight feet tall, and it had an elaborate root system. There was no grass or underbrush of any kind.

In Louisiana, we were accustomed to a large amount of rainfall, and along with the rain there was often a thunderstorm with much lightning and rolling thunder. Not once during my six months in Nevada did it rain. It did snow once or twice, but the snow was dry, and it fell in small amounts. I do not believe I ever saw more than a few inches on the ground. However,up on the tall mountains nearby the snow had accumulated to several feet because it did not melt in the summer.

For recreation, we went to movies, or played card games in the barracks. We also had boxing on a regular basis. Inever did get involved much in boxing, but I did have a remarkable experience there in Camp Gerlach. One of my friends in the barracks was a man named Mercer from Tennessee, and he seemed to be a real easy going person. At that time they were giving two packs of cigarettes to the winner of a boxing match, and one pack to the loser. Mercer asked me to enter the ring with him: he was larger than I and experienced at boxing, but he said that we would simply spar around a little just to get the cigarettes.! did not wish to do this, but as a favor to him, I consented.! planned to give Mercer my pack as I did not smoke. Once we were in the ring, he became a different person. He came out swinging pretty hard, and he connected a couple of his punches. This got me angry, and I started trying to hit him as hard as I could. The outcome of the match was that I received a bloody nose, and they called a TKO on me. I did not give Mercer my pack, and I never did feel good toward him because of the way he did.

Most of our work in Nevada was to build roads over the rough mountains. About all we did was to pry out the big rocks, and boulders and let them roll off to the side, and level off the dirt for the road bed. We never built any bridges, not even in the dry stream beds that our roads would transverse. We would simply lay a solid bed of flat rocks smoothly over the place the road was to pass. About all that could be said of those roads was that they were passable. But on the other hand, they probably would last a long, long time without further repair.

We began to hear about the danger of the Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever during this time, and the disease was supposedly carried by a tick. It was decided that all of us would have to take immunization shots for the disease, and this time I was much braver than before: I did not pass out. However, soon after I got the shot I began to break out with large welts about the size of a dollar. I began to get woozy, and then I really did pass out. I heard someone calling for the doctor, and when I awakened they were really shooting the medicine to me. It turned out that I had a severe allergy to the horse serum they used in the shot.

One day during our time there a group of us Louisiana boys decided to take a hike up the nearby mountain. It looked to be about a half-mile distance, but before we reached its base, we must have walked three or four miles. Then the ascent was fairly rapid: it was not steep. On top of the mountain we found snow that was over our waists. I still have pictures of myself

buried waist-deep in the snow. Among those who went with us was a boy we called "Blue-eyed" Wilson. I had known Blue-eyed back in Louisiana and he had gone to Gerlach on the train with me. He turned out to be somewhat of an entrepreneur. The dry cleaning of the camp was sent each fortnight by truck to Reno, at which time the previous dry-cleaning was picked up.BIue-eyed determined that he could buy all the material, do the job just as well during his spare time, make a good deal of money out of it, and also undercut the price we were paying. He was doing so well that I do not believe he left with the others at the end of his six month term.

It was about 1974 when Madge was working as administrator in the rest home at Stuttgart, that the owner of that home and many other rest homes in Arkansas came around to visit. I happened to be there at that time, and she introduced him to me as Mr. Floyd Wilson. He looked at me and said, "Pollack, 1939." Of course I knew that was where I was in 1939, but I had no idea who he was. He said, "Oh, you know. Blue-eyed Wilson." Then I remembered. He then told me how he had worked in a defense plant during WW II; he had told them he was an engineer, which he wasn't, but he had risen to the top. Now he was very wealthy and lived in Little Rock. He tried to talk me into going into the rest home business with him, but I was not in the least interested. Besides, I had nothing to invest.

Two tragedies happened back in Midway during my stay in Nevada. The first, and of course the more serious, was the death of two of my friends and the severe injury to another as a result of a wreck. They were driving an open top truck, and apparently had been drinking. As they were rounding a comer near LeCompte, the truck left the road. Lloyd Lamkin, a year my senior, was killed immediately, as was also Nadie Bailey who was my age. Rub Perry (Edith Young's first cousin) was injured, and he still carries many marks of that wreck, psychological as well as physical. I had many good times with these three young men; they were among the people with whom I had swum in the back water creeks, with whom I had taken walks through the woods, had raced on horseback, had worked with under the hot sun, and at times had fought with. I loved them as brothers. It was a severe blow to me to think that I would never see them agam.

The second tragedy was one that I did not even hear about until I returned. They told me then that Nellie had died. I could not understand how they failed to tell me about it; they must have known that I loved Nellie. I asked how she died; they said she died of distemper. They told me that they drug her off into the woods after she died, and they showed me some of the bones still remaining.! still miss Nellie.

In June we were all getting ready to depart:we had put in our six months in that God-forsaken land, and that was enough. But it was my luck that just a few days before we were to get on the train to head back, I contracted the chicken pox and was quarantined. They placed me in a large barracks by myself, and told me I would be there for about two weeks. But a day after they put me in, a couple more of the men came down with it, and before it was over, about six or seven of us were there. We lived the life of Riley, playing cards and eating well. Those two weeks were probably the only two weeks of my life that I have ever spent doing nothing.

During that spring in 1940 we were hearing a good deal of war talk. Early in 1939 Hitler had shown to the world that the peace accords drawn up at the Munich Conference would not restrain him from carrying out his ambitions: he took over the part of Czechoslovakia that was still outside his control, and then he had started a full-fledged war when he invaded Poland the following September.The war hadn't amounted to much until April of 1940 when Hitler sent his blitzkrieg through the lowlands. Within six weeks England was driven from the continent, and France forced to surrender. It seemed likely that most of us who were in the CCC would soon be drafted into the regular army.This looming fear of war laid the groundwork for one of the experiences I was to have on the train back home.

In the days just before I was put under quarantine, a very unattractive man from New Orleans that we called "Pimp" Wilson came to me and wanted to borrow some money. (Incidentally, we wbuld have had no idea what a pimp did at that time; we called him that because of the acne on his face.) He told me a rather sad story about his family not having any money, and he did not even have enough money to get a bus home after he got off the train. I told him that all the money I had were five silver dollars I was saving, and I did not feel I could lend him any. He acted so hurt, and looked so despondent that I relented and let him have the money. He said he would send it to me just as soon as he got home. I never heard from him again. But a couple of years later when I was in the Navy in Honolulu, I saw Pimp walking down the street with a good looking girl and he was dressed in a soldier's uniform. I went up to speak to him but did not have the heart to ask him for the money. It struck me as peculiar that practically no service man could ever get a date in Hawaii, but there was Pimp Wilson, as ugly as sin, and a buck private in the army, with a beautiful Hawaiian girl on his arm.

When the quarantine days were up, the CCC bought a train ticket for each of us who were then to go home, and they put us on a train. We were given vouchers for food, to eat on the diner. So whereas we had come to Nevada on what amounted to a troop train with rough accommodations, I was riding first class, with a sleeper and all the rest.

The small group I was with soon determined that it was much more fun to ride in the club car and play cards, and be noisy, rather than ride on the sleep car to which we were assigned. So after our first night on the sleeper, we spent the whole next day in the club car. Late that evening we came into Denver, and there was a lot of backing up and clanging of trains, but we stayed right on the club car where we had been. Later, after we left Denver, I started to go to my sleeper, and I could not find it. I had not been told that the train would split apart and one part would go in one direction, and the other part in another. I had lost my sleeper, but worse than that, I was on a train that would be taking me to the wrong place. But the conductor said he could fix it; he put me off at a place called Junction City, and he said my train would be along in a few minutes, and it would pick me up.

I saw some very beautiful scenery around Denver, but one experience stands out more than any other. I noticed that I seemed to have become very popular with the well-off people who were riding on the same sleeper that I was on. They liked to talk to me, and they seemed to genuinely like me. But then I overheard one say to another; "You ought to talk to that young

southerner in our car: he has the deepest brogue I have ever heard." *Mter* I found out they were making sport of my speech, I never talked to any of them again.

We came into Kansas City, Kansas, and there was to be a short layover there as I was to change trains. That was just about the largest waiting room I have ever seen. I must have looked pretty gullible, because it was not long before a man came up to me and told me a weird tale about something that happened to him and he needed ten bucks in a hurry, or else he would lose all his possessions. But he said if I could lend him the money, he could pay me back almost immediately. I told him that all I had was a tom dollar bill, and I did not think that would be of much help. He said he would take it and it would help some. He disappeared, and of course, I never heard from him again either.

Going south from Kansas City, I sat next to a sailor, and he tried to talk me into getting into the Navy. He had just joined himself, and he was going home on a boot leave (ten days leave after finishing boot camp) and he was really high on the Navy. There, he said, a person would really get to see the world. If war came, you didn't have to march endless miles, and eat dirt. The Navy was clean, and it was easy living. As for girls, all of them were crazy about Navy men. He made it sound like paradise.

It was not long until the train swung down through Arkansas, and it was almost as if a miraculous change came over everyone. People getting on the train were friendly; they talked "southern," and they talked to everybody. I think the main difference was that they simply seemed happier than the stuffed-shirt variety that I had been with. I knew then I was on the way home.

But when I got home, things had changed. Besides the death of Nellie, and the loss of my friends, many other young people had already left the community. Mama had given away all my clothes: it was as if she had moved me out permanently. I thought I would have enough money saved that when it was added to a scholarship I got from the school, I could go to college, but Uncle Fayette had only about $240.00 saved for me, and it did not appear near enough. I thought about going to Southwestern Louisiana Institute at Lafayette under a work-scholarship as Wallace had done but Wallace talked me out of it. He told me about the hard work and the short time for study, and he said I would be far better off joining the Navy. Besides, Essie Dee was having a hard time making ends meet, and she really needed the money I had saved. So I finally made the decision not to go to college and let Essie Dee have the money.

CHAPTER VI

THE U. S. NAVY

(August 1940 to Dec. 7, 1941)

During the time I had been in the CCC Camp, the old Church of God where Mama had been a member had been sold to the Assembly of God denomination, and they had a new minister who became very interested in saving my soul. I do not know if Mama had helped pre-arrange it, or if the man had made inquiries about when I was to leave for the Navy, but at any rate, he offered to take me down to the recruiter's office where I would be taken by a van to New Orleans to catch a train for San Diego. The minister took me early, and all the way he talked to me about getting saved. Then, he had lunch with me, and again, he was trying to force his religion on me. I had known all along that I simply did not have much use for the Pentecostal type religion, but by the time I got rid of him, I had come to a rather firm conclusion that I would never embrace any religion of any kind.

I arrived in New Orleans on August 30, 1940, along with ten other new recruits, and we were asked if any had ever taken a train ride. I said that I had. It was on this account alone that I was put in temporary charge of about eight recruits even though I was barely eighteen years of age. Among those on the train with me was John Roberts of Cheneyville, La. who now resides in Raceland, La. Later he was assigned to a destroyer that was a sister ship to the Worden, to which I was assigned. A few years ago (1990), he found out that I was a minister in Lafayette, and he called me. Later I called him, but to this date, we have not got together to discuss old times.

The train ride to San Diego beginning the next day was not all that memorable, but I do remember feeling the apprehension of a new and untried life. When we arrived at the San Diego Naval Training Station on September 3, the whole field was alive with sailors. Some were doing the 19 count manual, some were marching, some were in formation. They were all doing things to a cadence that seemed impossible to do.

The first thing they did to us was to assign us a company number: 40-63. Next they issued to us our clothing and supplies, and then they cut off our hair, all of it. They taught us how to pack our hammock, and fill our sea bag and tie it up. Now they said we would have to wash our clothes in a bucket, and hang them to dry. We would press them by putting them under our mattress. We were taught to salute,and since the men teaching us were petty officers, we had to salute them. But about the worst thing we could do was not to salute a commissioned officer. We were taught how to recognize these people, who stood next to God in terms of respect. We were also taught how to manage and fire a rifle, and to stand guard. We were taught all the knots that the Navy uses. But mainly, we marched and did the 19 count manual.

One of the solemn promises the Navy recruiter made to us was that when boot camp was over, we would be given a ten day boot leave to go see our families. Then we were to receive

a thirty day leave each year. But on Oct. 14, when we finished boot camp, they put us in a long line carrying our hammocks and sea bags, and marched us aboard the U. S. S.Crane and then transferred us to the U. S. Saratoga as a passenger to Hawaii. It was more than three years before I was to get sufficient leave to go home, and then it was only for 6 days.

Aboard the Saratoga they had us lay our hammocks out on the hangar deck, one deck below the flight deck where the planes landed. The ship would go into a long sustained roll, and it was about all we could do to keep our beds where they were instead of rolling down the steep incline. During the day time we were expected to do any job that we were assigned. To that time, we had not been given any dungarees to work in, and we had to work in our white uniforms. I was given the job of painting below decks, and I soon had paint allover my clothes as well as my shoes. My hair had been cut short on entrance to the boot camp, and I had received one other haircut, but by now my hair was getting pretty long around the edges. It was in the condition that I arrived in Hawaii on Oct. 19 and was placed aboard the U. S. Dobbin for further transfer.

My name was called out along with a few others to go aboard the U. S. S. Worden, a two stack destroyer which did patrol duty in the north Pacific along with a task force of other destroyers, cruisers, and aircraft carriers. When I first went aboard, I began to see that my training had been insufficient for this duty. We had been taught to come aboard, put down our hammock and sea bag, salute the flag, and then salute the officer of the day. I did this. But the officer was a Chief Petty Officer, which does not rate a salute. This CPO was a Chief Boatswain's Mate, and he really bellowed at me about saluting him. He tried to assign me a billet in the deck hand crew's quarters, but it turned out there was no vacancy. He then took me to the quartermaster's corps quarters and assigned me a billet there. That night, the Chief Quartermaster came and found me there and told me to get out. I asked him where to go, and he said I could take my hammock up on the main deck and sleep there, which I did. About six the next morning, I was rudely awakened by my bed being kicked: it was the Chief Boatswain Mate and he wanted to know what the hell I was doing there. I told him, and he said, "Pick up that bed and follow me." He took me back down the gangway, and he really gave the Chief Quartermaster a dressing down. I don't think I ever got very popular with that Chief Quartermaster after that. Within a few days the billeting situation was worked out when some of the seamen were transferred to the "black gang," that worked in the engine room.

Soon after the other recruits and I came aboard, the Worden got underway for a short two week's patrol. As we were getting underway, our "Captain's Gig" was being pulled alongside the ship by a line, and the boat davits were swung out over the boat, and the block and tackle attached to it by hooks. Then the boat was hoisted up to the top of the davits. It was about this time that the Chief Boatswain's Mate yelled at me, "Grab the sea painter." I looked about and saw nothing that even resembled a painter. He yelled again and used more choice words than I had ever heard before. Still I did nothing. Then he gave me a great big push and grabbed the line that had been pulling the boat when it was in the water. I could plainly see that the ways of the sea were not my ways.

In the months and years that followed, I noticed that nearly every time new recruits would come aboard, we would immediately take a short cruise, and if the weather was rough, the captain would often have our ship going full speed so that we would get the full impact of the pitching, yawing, and rolling motion of the ship. I believe it was done intentionally to expose the new recruits to a little sea-sickness. Certainly that is what happened when I came aboard. On the short patrol, our ship would hurl itself over the waves as fast as it could go,make short turns, and perform any other kind of maneuver that would guarantee a feeling of unsteadiness. meantime, the food that was served was exceedingly greasy which added to the general queasiness of the new recruits. Some of them began to vomit uncontrollably, and soon the mess hall floor had slimy vomit over a good deal of the linoleum. A funny thing: my stomach was stronger than many of the old sailors. I never did get sea sick, even when we were in violent storms at sea and had to stay in close quarters below deck. But I did pay a price: I was one who was given a mop and told to clean up the mess.

Our ship was a little more than thirty feet wide, but it was very long and shaped much like a cigar. The foc'sel deck started just a little forward of midships, and it was one deck above the main deck. The foc'sel deck house contained the officers' quarters, and the officers' state house where they ate, and had other social activities. Forward of that on the foc'sel were the No. 1 five inch gun, and the anchors. On top of the foc'sel were number 2 five inch gun, and housing for the captain, the navigator, and the executive officer. The topmost structure was the bridge where the captain of the ship, the navigators, the signalmen, the lookouts, the steersman, and usually the officer of the day stayed. High above the bridge, attached to the mainmast, was the crow's nest where a lookout was posted. The gunnery officer's station was also above the bridge, at the control center for the aiming of guns and direction of the searchlight.

The galley was on the main deck about midships, and forward down the gangway to the next deck below was the crew's mess. Ahead of that and still below decks were the Chief Petty Officers' quarters, which were directly below the Officers' Quarters. The paint locker was forward of the Chief's quarters. Amidships were the engine rooms below decks, the torpedoes on the main deck, and the No.3 five inch gun, the whaleboat and Captains Gig on the superstructure. On the after deck house was the No.4 gun where I was stationed for battle, and the searchlight tower just above that. In the deck house was the head, and on the main deck aft of the deck house was the No. 5 gun and the depth charges.

I soon settled down to the routine of work: chipping paint off of rusty decks, painting with red lead, and then covering over with a light blue-gray paint. We would also paint the bulkheads as needed, keep the brass brightly polished, and in general, keep the ship clean. We did have to use the mop or "swab" a good deal, and for this reason deck hands were often called "swabbies." Of course during rough weather, it was not possible to work on the main deck, so we either got to take off from work, or do such work as needed to be done below decks. All in all, it was not a hard life.

Our usual routine was to spend a couple of weeks at sea patrolling, and then spend a week-end in Pearl Harbor. Most of the sailors would be allowed to go on "liberty" when we got

in to the harbor, but there was always a skeleton crew remaining. Usually all the officers went ashore except the duty officer.

The highest ranking officer we had was our captain, a lieutenant commander. The executive was a lieutenant, as was also the gunnery officer. The deck officer was a lieutenant, junior grade. We had several ensigns aboard, altogether about ten or twelve officers.

As for liberty ashore in Hawaii, that was not all that much of a pleasure for me. There was no way that I could see to get a date with any of the Hawaiian girls, and about all that could be done would be go on a hiking trip, or sight-seeing trip with one of the shipmates. One person I often went ashore with was named Briley, and I believe he was from Oregon. But by far the most usual shipmate I went ashore with was Frank (Bud) Shoemaker, from Kent City, Michigan. Toward the end of my stay on the Worden, we were not quite so close as we had been, but still I remembered some good times we had together. I saw his name many years later in the Pearl Harbor publication , The Gram, and he was shown to be in a hospital in Michigan. His name appeared over a long period so I assumed he was working in the hospitaL I meant to write to him, but thought there was no necessity to hurry. Then I read of his death in The Gram. It turns out that he had been ill, and he would probably have really appreciated a letter from me. But I had waited too long.

On Dec. 3,1940 we took a memorable cruise to a position 500 miles southeast of Quam on a plane rescue mission. I remember the halcyon days we spent ~at sea., our watching the flying fish skitter across the water, and our catching several large sharks •.' On our return to Hawaii, we began to run low on fuel, and the Captain decided that we could sail our ship on in, using only the awnings that we ordinarily used to protect the deck from the hot sun. As a matter of fact, it was probably written up in some manual somewhere that this could be done in an emergency, and I suppose our captain wanted to try it out. So he ordered us to break out the canvass, and all at once our old Chief Boatswain's Mate began to be in his glory. He had been in the old Navy when such things were done, and I can still hear him yelling, "Avast heaving," and other such orders. We finally made it back, but not before we waffled several weeks at sea.

I had long before found out that the Chief Boatswain's Mate was a far different man than first he appeared to be. He was probably about as ugly as any human could be: with a barrel chest, burly figure, and dark features; he could easily have substituted for an ape. But after first giving me so much trouble, M became one of my chief supporters. He found out that I was trying to study for Annapolis, and he made sure that time was provided for my studies. He did all he could to encourage me. At one point, he tried to get me to take the examination for first class seaman, he told me that he would recommend me if I wanted it. I told him I was not ready yet, but that I wanted to concentrate on the Annapolis studies. I eventually was able to take the examination for Annapolis, and I did real well on all except one subject, physics. That was a subject that I had not had in high schooL But failing this one subject was enough to prevent my going to the Naval Academy.

We returned to the states for repair on August 20, 1941 and we docked at the Long Beach

Naval Station near Los Angeles. We were to be there too shortly for us to receive enough leave to go home, but even if we had been able to get leave, I came down with a bad case of bronchial pneumonia, and had to be taken by ambulance to the Naval Hospital in San Diego on September 4. But before that happened, I got to visit Richard Polakovich's sister Helen Raciot and her family who lived in Los Angeles, and I was very well treated by them. I wrote in my diary that I had the time of my life. It was duriUg this time that I attended an auction, and the auctioneer annOl~nced that any bid that a sailor made would be the last bid; we would be able to get it at that price. A beautiful woman's hat (at least beautiful in my eyes) came up for auction, and I bid on it and got it for Richard's sister. There was a lot that I had not yet learned about human nature, specifically that women would not have much regard for a hat that someone bought them at auction. However, she acted real pleased.

It was while I was in the hospital in San Diego that I learned that Herbert had joined the Navy. He had told me that he was planning to get Mamma and Dad to sign for him, and I wrote them an urgent letter asking them not to do it. But apparently the letter got there too late, or they disregarded it. Herbert was sent to the San Diego Naval Training Station where I had been sent, and as I was now in the hospital there, he was able to come see me.

While I was recovering in the hospital, I had a strange experience .. There were many sailors there who had gotten in some kind of trouble and they were under the supervision of several Marine MPs. Sailors and Marines did not have much love for one another, and the MPs enjoyed making the sailors run or do menial tasks that showed they had authority over them. Once I was in the chow line, and the MPs huffily came up and told me to get out of their way, they were bringing some prisoners through. Apparently I was not fast enough for them, because they began to curse me and threaten to have me in the line with the prisoners if I did not get a move on me. I was almost tempted to give them some sass, but sweet reason told me that I had better not.

When I returned to the Worden at Pearl Harbor on Oct. 3, I found the Worden in dry dock to scrape the barnacles off the hull of our ship. This time, it was not only the deck hands who worked; all the ship's crew with the exception of officers and chiefs went over the side of the ship and sat on long boards suspended from lines tied to the guardrail above, and scraped barnacles with an instrument that looked like a hoe that had been straightened out.It was pretty scary to look down and see the hard bottom of that dry dock; it would have meant instant death if anyone had fallen.

Herbert requested to be put aboard the Worden with me and when I returned to the ship, I found that Herbert was already aboard. His being there made things a good deal different than they had been before. For one thing, Herbert liked to gamble, and he was good at it. He had several sailors owing him money, and since Herbert is a rather small person, all of them were larger than he. One person in particular, called Tex, owed him money and would not pay. He was larger than Herbert or me. But Herbert told him if he did not pay up, I would take care of him. Tex came around to me and said that he heard that I wanted to take him on in a fist fight. I disclaimed any knowledge of the situation, and I asked Herbert to please not involve me in his

gambling collections.

During the next two months, war talk: began to get more and more serious. The United States was now doing all we could to help the Allies without actually getting in the shooting war, and it did not look as if we could stay out of the war for much longer. Gunnery practice on the ship became more serious and more frequent. We were doing a lot of work on the simulator, which was a machine that duplicated actual loading and firing of a five inch gun. The ships had already been covered over with a dull blue-gray paint, all port-holes had been welded shut, and the brass work was all painted. Our maneuvers were also designed to duplicate actual battle conditions, with smoke screens, high speed turns, simulated torpedo attacks, depth charge attacks, etc. We knew that war could not be far off.

I had an experience during this time that has remained in my memory. I was sent up to the crow's nest as a lookout, and after getting bored with looking our over a calm sea for a few hours and seeing nothing but water, I sat down on a stool that was in the nest, and I began to read funny books that were left there. All at once I heard a voice calling my name over the communications system, and they wanted to know what kind of ships that were out there on the horizon. I got up and looked, and they were not on the horizon; they were all around us. I felt that I was very lucky that I had not been court-martialed, or at least called up before the Captain's mast.

On Friday evening, Dec. 5 we were entering Pearl Harbor after a two week cruise with our task force, and our sonar device recorded an underwater sound like that of a submarine. Our Captain tried to ascertain if it was a friend or foe, but there were no subs of ours reported to be in the area. We asked permission to drop depth charges, but the permission was denied because we were not at war. As to whether this story is completely accurate, I do not know because seamen are not told the details of such things from the highest authority, but I do know that we made several depth charge runs over the area in a criss-cross fashion, but did not drop any explosives.

Mter we came up alongside a destroyer that was tied to the U. S. S. Dobbin and tied up to it, several of us were on the fantail talking about the possibility of an attack on Pearl Harbor. I said that I thought the Japanese would strike the oil tanks where all our reserve oil was kept. They were lined up like ducks in a row on Ford Island, near our ship. But Frank Shoemaker said that he believed they would sink our battleships. Of course, Frank later proved to be right.

The final entry into my diary is as follows:

"Dec. 7, 1941. It was early on Sunday morning and everyone was lounging round, reading papers or asleep. We began to notice explosions and saw planes diving. They looked unfamiliar, and when we looked across the harbor, we saw great columns of smoke rising. At first we thought it was practice, but when we saw the U. S. S. Utah get hit, we manned our guns immediately. Although there was no air on our guns, we would ram by hand and fire as quickly as possible. (Note: these five inch guns were normally powered by air, as ramming the shell case and projectile into the breach of the gun required an extraordinary force). There were six of us

destroyers tied to the Dobbin so we made a large target. (Note: there were only five destroyers; the sixth ship was the Dobbin itself, a large tender which would have offered a pretty large target even if there had been no destroyers) One squadron tried to bomb us but we drove them away with anti-aircraft fire. However, one bomb hit 50 feet off our fantail. One of our machine gunners brought down a plane.

"We had an hour of nearly steady firing. The noise was enough to burst the eardrums. Some men on the Dobbin were killed from strafing. The Worden was inboard ship (Note: this is probably inaccurate; the Worden was second to being inboard) but was the second to get underway. As we left the harbor, we first saw the Utah sinking, then we saw the Arizona burning allover. The West Virginia was afire and sinking, and the Tennessee was tied inboard of it to the dock. The Oklahoma had capsized. We saw the California sinking. We also saw the floating dry dock sinking, and the U. S. S. Cassin, which was in it, was blown half in two and was burning. Near the net of the harbor we saw the Nevada beached and sitting low in the water. It had been bombed."

As I have noted, there were several inaccuracies in my diary which I cannot account for. I did not write this information down until a few days after the attack, and I might still have been a little discombobulated.

I do remember some parts of the attack from a more personal standpoint. To begin with, it was my brother Herbert who first came down to alert the crew's quarters. I believe I was lying on the bunk about half awake when he came running down the gangway calling my name. I asked him what was the matter and he said that there were some strange planes buzzing around. He had been up for about an hour working in the galley, as he was a ship's cook striker, and he might have been the very first in our whole group of ships that saw the planes. I hurriedly dressed and went topside with him, and almost instantly recognized that they were Japanese from the red dot on their wings. I told Herbert to go and find the Officer of the Day so he could sound general quarters, and I would go and alert the crew. I went down the gangway yelling as loud as I could, "The Japs are attacking."

One of my shipmates at the time was Woody Woodson from DeWitt, Arkansas, and he was one who heard me as I came running down. I saw him a few years ago when I was in Stuttgart, about 1974, and I asked him if he remembered me running down yelling. He said, "You bet, I do." I asked him if he believed me when I said the Japs were attacking, and he said, "Yes, I did. You were as white as a sheet."

Not all the crewmen believed it was an attack, A black man who worked in the ammunition magazine started to go down in the magazine to send up ammunition, but before he did , he asked, "What do they want, target ammunition?" I used some kind of expletive, and said, "Just so it will shoot."

When I went up on topside again, I saw Gunner's Mate 3/c, Jack Wright, from our gun crew looking for a key to unlock the firing pin for our five inch gun. General quarters had not

even sounded yet: I imagine Herbert had had a hard time finding the Officer of the Day. There were no officers aboard our ship at the beginning of the attack other than this one, and apparently he wasn't too visible.

Mter about two or three minutes we got our gun crew together and our gun into operation. From that time on, we laid down a heavy barrage of anti-aircraft fire by firing projectiles that would explode after 2 1/2 seconds. The sky was covered with puffs of smoke from these exploding projectiles from our guns and others over the harbor.

At that time we had neither radar nor real anti-aircraft firepower. The five inch guns were far too slow to maneuver to shoot a moving plane, and our 50 caliber machine guns did not have sufficient range. After the war started, we soon had two 40 millimeter guns placed on the after deck house, and several 20 millimeter guns placed around on the main d~ck~.c:But at Pearl Harbor, all we had were the five inch guns, and two machine guns.

Mter about an hour there came a respite from the attacking planes, and by then our deck was covered with empty shell casings, and the gun was smoking hot. We cleared the deck and got ready for another attack, and it was not long in coming. This time, we could see them plainly coming in, and our ships were right in their pathway. Not only that, we presented a large target. I still do not know why they did not put more effort into bombing us. At any rate, we began to fire as quickly as we could in their direction, and it was at this time a singular thing happened to one of our crewmen. His name was Sutter, a red headed irishman. He had on the phones to communicate with the gunnery officer. and all at once he discontinued speaking. He was holding the guardrail tightly and gazing up at the incoming planes. Our gunner's mate yelled at him, but he paid no attention. Finally the gunner's mate gave him a push and took the phones from him, but still the man did not respond.

It was only a few minutes later that I myself had an experience that has greatly influenced my life. I was just over behind the bulkhead picking up a powder casing, when I heard the gunner's mate named Voorhies yell, "If anyone has ever prayed, now's the time." I knew what he meant; a plane or a bomb was headed our way. So I closed my eyes for an instant and said silently, "Lord, it looks like I am coming to meet you now. Please forgive me for my sins." At that instant there was aloud explosion off the fantail of our ship, and our ship along with the other destroyers raised up on a large wave. About that time I heard someone caling, "Richard, Richard." It was Herbert who had left his gun on the bow to come running back to the after deck house to see about me because from his vantage point, it seemed that the bomb had fallen right where I was. When our ship came back down again, all the line connecting us to the large ship Dobbin parted, and sent us drifting. Also, it was at this time that we saw several mops full of blood being thrown overboard from the Dobbin.

The man who was given credit for shooting down a Jap plane from our ship was named Ray Brubaker, and I have seen him at many meetings of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. It was most likely the same plane that came close enough to drop the bomb that he shot down. At any rate, we saw many Japanese planes go down that day.

The full impact of what happened didn't hit us until we started on our exit from the harbor, about 11:00 o'clock. The main memory I have is that of the great Arizona,, which seemed to be ripped open from forward to aft, and tremendous flames and smoke were billowing from it Oil was all around on the water, and much of it was on fire. We passed almost near enough to the burning battleships to throw rocks at them. The heat was so intense that we had to take shelter behind bulkheads. One scene is etched on my memory more than any other. The great U. S. S. West Virginia was burning, and there was one lone sailor up on one of the higher decks, and he had a hose that was still functioning. He was shooting water all around. But it occurred to me then that I could hardly stand the heat at the distance we were: how could he possibly be standing the heat when he was almost in the midst of the flames? Obviously it was too far to the edge of the ship to jump over. Yet, he was still trying to make it.

...It is hard to express the deep sadness that overcame the members of our crew as we steamed out of the harbor that day. We were extremely proud of the Navy, and our hearts would have been broken of only one of our great ships had been sunk. But to see all of them either sunk or sinking, and our entire fleet virtually decimated, was almost more than we could bear. It was not that we were afraid, or even that we thought that the Japanese could beat us; it was the loss of the ships and the men that tore us up.

That night we were separated from the other ships as we were not allowed to communicate with one another. We were not sure where the Japanese fleet was, or whether or not it was planning to come in for an invasion. Ever since the attack, no person other than the people who worked below decks were allowed to go below. We all had to stay on our battle station at full alert. My night battle station was the huge searchlight. There were only four commands that I might receive. The first was to strike the are, which in effect turned on the light. But no light yet escaped the sealed shutters. The second command was to open the shutters: that allowed the light to go out in a large beam which brought into bright view objects that were several miles distance. The only other commands were to close the shutter and to douse the light. Stationed on the bow of our ship was a sharp-eyed Texan named Branscomb. He drank a lot, and he was quarrelsome, but his night vision was really good. All at once I heard Branscomb on the phones saying, "A ship three points off the starboard bow, sir." Immediately the guns and the searchlight swung out in that direction in sync with the fire control tower. I received the order to strike the arc which I did. Then the order went to the gun captains, "Load the guns." Just as that order came, the No.1 gun fired without being order to do so, and now the phone began to really come alive. The command came to me, "Open the shutter. Open the shutter." And I quickly obeyed. Then our fighting lights (specific colors of lights pre-arranged with all ships for quick recognition) came on, as did the lights of the other ship. When we saw the ship under our searchlight, we could see that it was not all that far from us, and all of its 8 inch guns were pointed in our direction. They were about to blast us out of the water. I sure was grateful for those fighting lights.

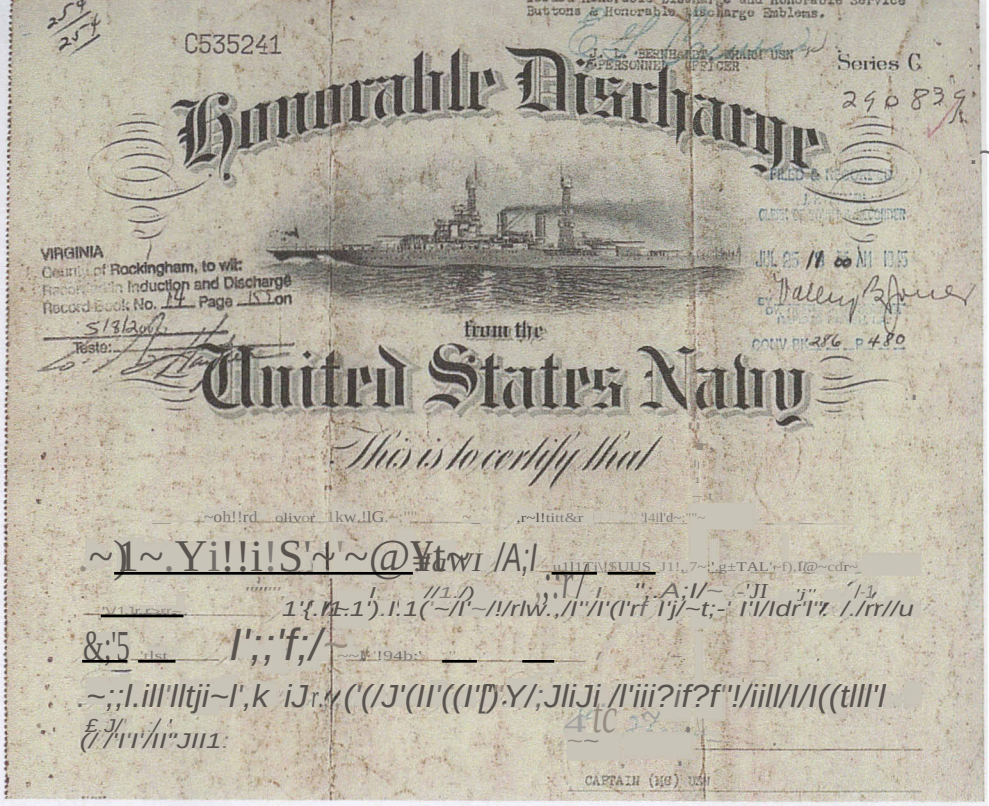
The next night we came into to Pearl Harbor at the munitions dock to restock our supplies, and all people aboard, both officers and men, passed ammunition to our magazine. *Mter* a time, I was given a rifle and told to walk guard duty along the dock. As I was walking

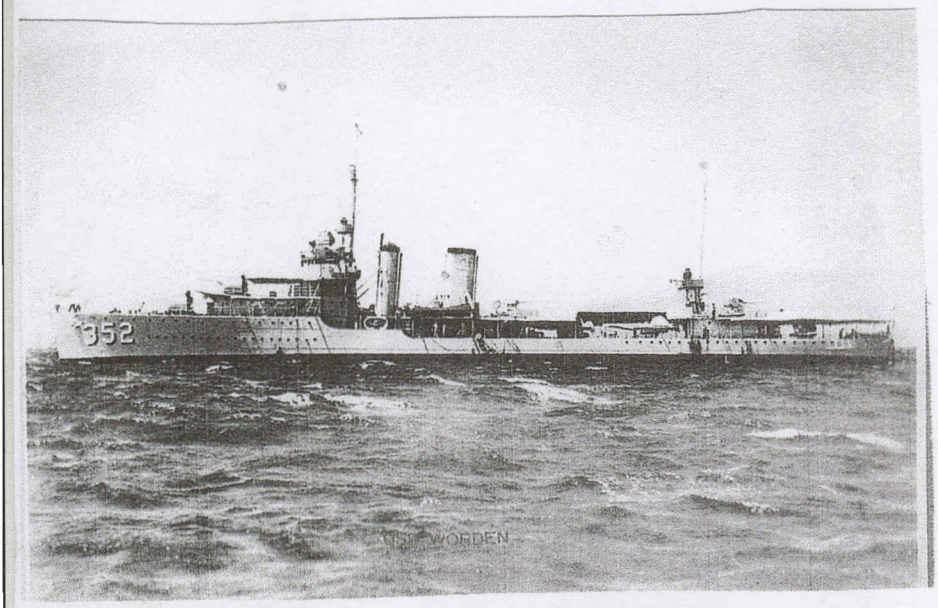
to and fro, a small man came toward me without the identification tag that he was supposed to be wearing. I began taking the rifle from my shoulder and I said, "Halt," but the man did not stop. I clicked the safety off, and that brought him to a stop. I said, "Where is your identification?" He began reaching under the light jacket he had on, and I was sure he was going for a gun. I was squeezing the trigger when he brought out the tag and said, "I am Chinee. I am Chinee." I have often felt grateful that I did not kill that man that night.

From that time onward for the next several months, we were mostly out to sea, and had very little shore leave. Our days were spent mostly on the gun watches, with four hours on duty and four hours off. During the daytime off duty hours we would do our regular upkeep work. In this way, the war settled down mostly to a boring kind of waiting for something to happen. However, as will be seen in the next section, there were many more war stories to tell.

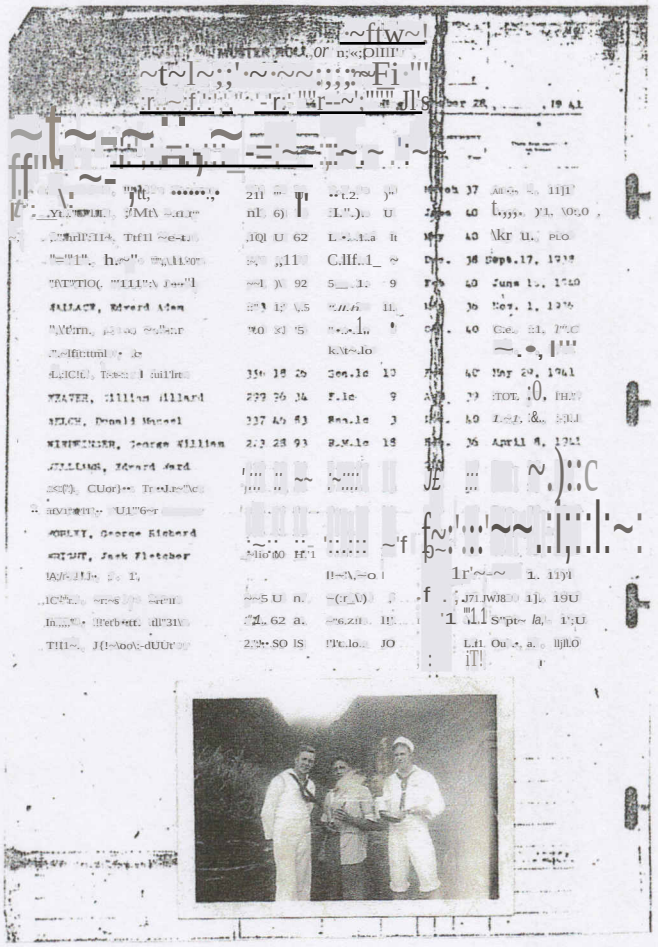
Ford,
Richard
1957.

Above lsthe only picture I have of my Navy ROTC days at Duke, At the right, my discharge. Below myoid ship the USS Worden, And at bottom left is a "pretend to be drunk" picture. I don't think any of us reatly imbibed.





Below is a copy of the Worden's roster of the ship's crew dated Dec. 31, 1941, only three weeks after the Pearl Harbor attack. My name as well as my brother Herbert's appear on it. The picture at the bottom includes my Navy buddy Bud Shoemaker on the right.



CHAPTER VII

THE U. S. NAVY
(Dec. 7, 1941 - July 1945)

Dropping depth charges on submarines or on suspected submarines was an important part of our contribution to the war. On the very afternoon of the attack on Pearl Harbor, we dropped seven depth charges near Oahu, and twice again on Jan. 16 and Jan. 22 we dropped depth charges. We could not be certain that we ever actually hit a sub in this way, but usually when we dropped the charges, debris would come floating to the surface. This could have been contrived, however, to make it appear we had been successful.

We did not receive mail for more than a month after the attack, but during that time I tried many times to write Mama to let her know we were OK. Herbert never liked to write and so far as I know, he only wrote one letter home when we were on the Worden, and he mailed that one with one of my letters. Herbert and I had mailed Mama a Christmas package from Hawaii earlier than Dec. 7, so she knew we were there during the attack. However, she did not get a letter from us until February. When she did get a letter, this fact made the Alexandria Town Talk, and it was published on the same day again in the newspaper in 1992 under the heading,"50 Years Ago Today." Mama kept all my letters, and they were found in a box after her death, along with the letter from Herbert. I suppose it gave her comfort to reread them. But the truth is, we could say almost nothing in our letters having any content because of the censors after the war. I still have the box of letters that she kept, and it fills me with sadness to read them.

On February 5, 1942 our ship escorted the seaplane tender Curtiss to New Caledonia by way of Samoa and Fiji. I remember the sailors getting excited because the Samoan girls were topless, but as a matter of fact, even so, they were not all that great to look at. We were given a brief liberty ashore, and many sailors bought mats woven from cane, thinking they were native products. But back aboard ship, they discovered the markers, "Made in Japan." In Fiji we saw a few people with bones in their noses, and their dark kinky hair was red on the outer end, probably bleached from the sun. We heard they had at one time been cannibalistic, and they looked the part.

Again back to Pearl in March, we joined the Lexington (a massive carrier) to go to the Coral Sea, but were detached from her on May 2 to escort the tanker Tippecanoe to Noumea, New Caledonia. On May 4-8, while we were separated from them, the Battle of Coral Sea was fought, and the Lexington was sunk. Due to our being a part of the task force and the fact we were still in the proximity of the action, our ship was given credit for participating in the battle.

I had an unusual experience in Noumea, New Caledonia. We were given a few hours liberty to go ashore, but were told that most of the French people there were Vichy-French and not friendly to Americans. We were advised to be very careful not to have trouble with any of them, and to stay with large groups of sailors. I went ashore with my friend Bud Shoemaker,

and soon after we got ashore, we encountered a beggar asking for alms. I had already exchanged my money for French money, so I gave the man a large 2 franc coin. I thought I was being generous. But the man threw the coin on the ground and began to rail at us in French. A large crowd soon gathered around us, but soon I saw our chief boatswain's mate and several other sailors pushing through the crowd. The chief gave the man a five hundred franc note and he was satisfied.

On May 22, 1942 we crossed the equator, and the shellbacks aboard did not let the polliwogs forget that they were now entering into the domain of King Neptune. I received the following summons, which I still have in my possession:

SUBPOENA AND SUMMONS EXTRAORDINARY

The Royal High Court of the Raging Main

District of EQUATORIUS
Vale of Pacificus s. s. : Richard Oliver Young
Domain of Neptune Rex

TO WHOM MAY COME THESE PRESENT:

GREETING AND BEWARE

WHEREAS: The good ship U. S. S. Worden DO 352, bound northward is about to enter our domain; and the aforesaid ship carries a large and slimy cargo of landlubbers, beachcombers, sea-lawyers, lounge-lizards, parlor-dunnigans, plow-deserters, park-bench warmers, chicken-chasers, hay-tossers, chit-signers, sand-crabs, four-flushers, squaw-men, and all other living creatures of the land, and last but not least; he-vamps and liberty-hounds falsely masquerading as seamen, of which low scum you are a member, having never appeared before us; and

WHEREAS, The Royal Court of the Raging Main has been convened by us on board the good ship U. S. S. Worden DO 352 on the 22nd day of May 1942, Latitude 0* 00' 00", and an inspection of our High Royal Roster shows that it is high time the sad and wandering nautical soul of that much-abused body of yours appear before the High Tribunal of Neptune; and

BE IT KNOWN, That we hereby summon and commend you Richard Oliver YOUNG now a Sea. 1c, U. S. Navy; to appear before the Royal High Court and our August Presence on the aforesaid date at such time as may suit our pleasure, and to accept most heartily and with good grace the pains and penalties of the awful tortures inflicted upon you. To be examined as to fitness to become one of our Trusty Shellbacks and to answer the following charges:

CHARGE I: - - in that Richard Oliver YOUNG now a Sea .. 1c., U. S. Navy, has hitherto wilfully and maliciously failed to show reverence and allegiance to our Royal Person, and is therein and hereby a vile landlubber and polliwog.

CHARGE II: - - Inticing Herb. to join the Navy.

DISOBEY THIS SUMMONS UNDER PAIN OF OUR SWIFT AND TERRIBLE DISPLEASURE. OUR VIGILANCE IS EVER WAKEFUL, OUR VENGEANCE IS JUST AND SURE.

Given under our hand and seal.

Attest, for the King:

F. W. Milet
DAVY JONES

M. *B. Dye*
NEPTUNUS, REX

Of course, the whole affair was all in fun, but the torture they meted out was less than fun, and I feel could have turned dangerous. First we had to go on hands and knees down a line between two groups of men yielding shillelahs made of rope hardened by soaking them in water. After this shellacking, we had to climb a vertical ladder, with the full force of a large fire hose in our face, and then we had to kiss the baby's toe (a fat man with a sheet for a diaper represented the baby) and then kneel before the queen (a man with a mop on his head for woman's hair and other props). As we were doing that, a shellback touched us with a sword (a copper blade with electricity attached) and this caused us to draw up in a knot. They then made us get up on a copper-plated table and they "operated" on us with the electrified knife. Finally, they had us to crawl through a canvas tube which ended in a large water filled canvass bag. When we came up from that dunking, we were through.

When I went through the line, the man who had been only a couple of people ahead of me in getting the treatment, turned around and began to help in initiating me. I did not like this, and seeing a bucket of water, I lifted it and poured it on his head. The executive officer Anderson had been observing from behind the bridge above us, and he yelled out, "Give it to that man double." They sent me through the line again.

On May 26 we were back at Pearl Harbor replenishing our stores and ammunition, but we soon saw this was not to be an opportunity to obtain shore liberty in Oahu. The ships waited in line to take on supplies, and everything we did was in great haste. As soon as we finished, we put to sea, and joined the Enterprise and the Hornet, two of our large carriers. Then it seemed as if all the ships were racing to see which could reach our destination first. The only thing wrong was that we had no idea where we were going. A few days later, perhaps the fourth or fifth of June, our "Old Man," Captain Poague, called all hands to the main deck to give us a speech. As he had never done that before, we knew it was serious. He told us that we were about to engage in battle with one of the largest naval fleets in history. He reminded us of how Commander James Lawrence said to never give up the ship, but fight till she sinks and he said we must be prepared to die for our country. I suppose he was trying to pump some courage into us, but as far as I was concerned, he did nothing more than give me a good scare. Then he gave the order to "strip ship," that is, get rid of everything that would bum, that we did not need for battle.

My battle station was the No.4 gun on the after deck house, but the job I was given in stripping ship was at the other end of the ship on the bow. I was sent four decks below to the paint locker, and several people were lowering lines to me down through four hatches. I would secure the lines to the handles of the paint buckets and they would draw them up and throw them overboard. All at once in the midst of this process, the general quarters sounded. There were

two rules of the Navy that came into immediate conflict: first was the rule that you never left a hatch open when you left the below decks, and secondly, you always responded to general quarters by reporting immediately to your battle station. I decided to follow the rule of closing the hatch. But I had a problem. The men lowering the lines had secured them at the top to the handrail, and they had deserted me and gone to their battle stations, leaving the lines dangling down into the paint locker. There was only about a six inch space around the hatch, but after some maneuvering, I was able to get the excess line placed around the open hatch, and close it, then go to the next one above. But there my problem was compounded; I had much more line to place in the small space around the hatch. Mter much struggling, I got it done. But when I reached the third hatch, it had well nigh become an impossibility. By that time our guns were firing, and I knew we were under attack, and I knew I would be in trouble at my battle station. It was about this time that some of the maintenance crew saw the open hatch on the bow and came to close it. They saw my trouble, and quickly cut the lines. When I got to the battle station, the gunner's mate was angry, but when he heard my story, he decided I had done the right thing. Our ship was not hit, but the Yorktown, another of our great carriers which was near us, was. It had not sunk when we left it, but it was burning, and all its sailors except those killed in the battle were able to escape. Our pilots sent word that we had won a great naval battle that day, called the "Battle of Midway."

Mter returning to Pearl, we joined the Saratoga on June 13, and headed out toward the South Pacific on July 9. On July 28 our ship picked up 36 survivors from the sunken Army transport, the Tjinegara, and took them to Noumea, New Caledonia, arriving on August 1. The survivors were all kept below deck under guard, and not allowed to see any of our ships in the area. They complained bitterly about being treated this way, but our Captain did not want any knowledge of our ship movements to become published by these people after we let them off. On August 3 we caught up with the Saratoga and were on our way to Guadalcanal.

It was during this time that we began to run low on food. We had not had a supply of food since the middle of June, and we were accustomed to being resupplied every 2 weeks. Before we got our next supplies, we were eating two meals daily, and both meals consisted of com-bread and dried peas. The peas were served like soup in a bowl, and little white worms would rise to the top. I would collect my worms with a spoon and throw them away. I remember one sailor saying, "I just can't eat this food." Another one said, "Let me have it." The one who received the bowl gathered the worms with his spoon, and plopped them in his mouth. A week or so later, when a tanker came alongside to refuel us, they sent over a couple of boxes of apples for us to eat. It was a sad sight to see sailors fighting over those apples.

The planes from the Saratoga were soon taking part in the attack on Guadalcanal in preparation for landing, and helped to sink the Japanese carrier Ryujo and damage the seaplane tender, the Chitose, before it (the Saratoga) was hit by a torpedo. Sailors on our ship actually saw the submarine that fired the torpedo, as it came to the surface right in the middle of our task force. We were not able to fire at it because this would have endangered other ships, and it submerged immediately again. We, and several other destroyers laid down a criss-cross pattern of depth charges that almost certainly sank the sub. We were sure that the sub had time to send

a message to the home base as to our exact location, and we knew we ought to get out of there as soon as possible. However, for us this was not possible as we and another destroyer were assigned to escort the Saratoga to Tonga Tabu for repairs, and the top speed of the damaged Saratoga was about five knots. We were glad to get out of that one alive.

When we were coming into the port of Tonga Tabu, we were met by a whole wave of outrigger canoes laden with somewhat green bananas which the natives wanted to sell. We were extremely hungry, and bought all we could afford. The only trouble was that we ate them too quickly, and they made most of us sick. Many who did not get sick from the bananas got sick from some of the native home-brew which they purchased when they got a few hours liberty.

We arrived back at Pearl on September 23, and even though we had received supplies at Tonga Tabu, one thing I remember well is that at last we got all the food we wanted to eat. Five days later we sailed for San Francisco with the battleships Idaho and Pennsylvania. At that time I asked for a transfer from the ship as I had fallen into extreme disfavor with the Chief Boatswain's Mate whose name was Griswald, who was my main boss. It seemed to me that whereas the Chief who was on board when I first came on the Worden did all he could to get me ahead, this chief did all he could to put me down. In retrospect, I probably was as much to blame as he was; however, that does not change the fact that I was being held down from any kind of promotion because of the chief's disfavor. I talked to the commissioned officer Caldwell who was over us, and he suggested the transfer since he sympathized with my position, but could offer me no aid. On Dec. 27, the Worden went from there to the Aleutians, and was sunk on a rock on January 12, 1943. Fourteen of the crew drowned, but Herbert fortunately was one of the survivors.

I was sent to Goat Island for further transfer, and immediately tried to get leave, since all of the Worden sailors were getting leave. Because of the large number of sailors passing through there, I was unsuccessful in my efforts, so I went to a chaplain (my first encounter with these men of the cloth) and asked for his help. My two year absence from home, and my service in the Pacific battles of the Navy did not move him. He suggested that with the war going on and thousands of men wanting to go home, I certainly had some nerve to come to him with a problem like that. This encounter left me with a sour taste for chaplains.

Soon I was assigned to the U. S. S. Laub, another destroyer but considerably larger than the Worden. She had not yet been commissioned, and we commissioned it in Long Beach after I was aboard. I had one happy experience while in Long Beach that still stands out in my memory. I had learned that H.J. and Beverly Poole were living in the Los Angeles area, and I made an arrangement to go see them at Christmas of 1942. While I was there, Willy Bee Lampkin (who lived in the community of Midway where I grew up) and Ivy Scott (one of my classmates at Forest Hill High School) also came to see them. It was about the best Christmas I ever had, because home and the people there meant so much to me.

We sailed for the Panama Canal about the end of ~~~e weather there was so hot that we could have fried our eggs on the iron hull of the ship. But then a week or so later,

we came into Norfolk, Virginia, and a Canadian clipper must have just arrived; I have never felt so cold in my life. We were issued face masks, and heavy clothes, but still the cold was biting.

Our home port became Brooklyn Navy Yard, and our main work for the next few months was to escort large supply ships overseas to such places as Casa Blanca, Oran, Safi, and Tunis. Very often the captain would see something floating in the water, and we would shoot at it, or out of pure curiosity, he would have us throw grappling hooks over to snag it, and bring it aboard. Once we drew up a life jacket with the upper part of a man's torso in it. I believe the captain was less curious after that. We never encountered any submarines on these missions, but we did see plenty of floating objects which told of their success in sinking cargo vessels.

On board ship, the bunks were stacked in close order as they had been on the Worden, and the persons above us and below us were supposed to sleep with their head on the opposite end of the bed from us. The man above me had very smelly feet, and it disturbed my sleep. I decided to try an experiment to stop this displeasure. I bought some french perfume on one of our stops in Casa Blanca, and I doused his bed liberally with it. But the perfume mixed with the foot odor made it far worse than it had been before. That might be one reason I do not like the smell of perfume to this day.

I had an experience in Safi which made a lasting impression on me in several ways. This was the oldest walled city in Africa, and it was definitely a place where all of us wanted to go ashore and visit. The Arabs there were very anxious to have our mattress covers to use for their white robes, and we learned they were paying several hundred francs for them, but the captain said that we were not permitted to take any ashore to sell. Another shipmate and I each folded one neatly and put them under our jumper in front, and we went undetected ashore. We sold the covers for 500 francs, and then we went to a stable and rented two horses. Our intention was to ride several miles to the next town, but we could hardly get those horses to move. All the beating and yelling we could do would not excite them beyond a slow pace. Finally we had gone about three or four miles, and seen nothing but sand and a few adobe-like houses with sulky looking Arabs lying about so we turned around to go back. By this time, it must have been around five or six o'clock, and the instant we turned the horses around, they began at a full gallop. We let them go as fast as they wanted, because this was fun, but when we came to the cobblestone streets of Safi, we tried to check them up. My horse continued to fly around the street comers, and before I knew it, the horse skidded on the cobble stone street and landed on my leg. At first, it was only skinned up some and bruised, but after a few days, it began to swell up. The doctor looked at and called it cellulitis; he treated it with sulfa drugs as there were no antibiotics at the time. Mter a few weeks of illness during which I had high fever, the doctor was able to lance my swollen knee and remove about a pint of fluid. Mter that I quickly improved. Later the doctor told me that he was afraid they were about to lose me. I still carry both scars on my left knee; one from the skinned place, and one from the lancing.

One of my most important experiences during my Atlantic duty began about July 1, 1943, when our ship came into the port of Oran, in Algeria, North Mrica. There were thousands of ships of all descriptions in the harbor at the time; principally American but also British, and

others from our allies. We had an arrangement with the army stationed there at that time that if they should see any enemy airplanes in the area, they would tum on some red lights, and when all was clear, they would tum on their green lights. Around nine o'clock that evening, just after dark, the army's red light came on. Soon some gunners on one of the ships saw some planes, and they began to fire. All at once the whole harbor was lit up with gunfire. 1 was on one of the large five inch guns with double barrels,and we were firing as fast as we could. Flares were dropped over the harbor, and it made all of us plainly visible to any planes above. All at once our gunnery officer began to shout over the phones, "Cease firing. Cease firing." We all thought he was crazy because we thought we saw planes coming in, in formation. But after the whole harbor finally became quiet, it turned out that it was a false alarm. Several people on our ship were injured slightly from falling shrapnel, but other than that, we saw no damage to any ships.

However, we were there in Oran for a purpose, and that purpose was not long in being revealed. The huge fleet of ships began to move out into the Mediterranean, and we began to be joined by even more ships. Soon there were ships ahead of us, and behind us, and on both sides of us as far as we could see. We were on our way with an invasion force to Sicily.

Upon our nearing the coast of Sicily, we began to encounter German opposition. We seem to have had air superiority; yet the German planes were very active in trying to bomb or strafe us. One of our maintenance crew was not at his battle station: he was up on the main deck to watch what was going on. A machine gun bullet from one of the planes exploded near his foot and blew it off. Several others standing around caught some of the shrapnel, but nothing serious. We did see a large mine sweeper explode near us, and we supposed it was a mine that caused it because we did not see any planes attacking it.

Our job was to help in laying down a barrage over the sector of the coast we were near, and our five inch guns (eight of them), under the direction of spotters from planes, fired almost continuously for about three days. We were near great battleships or heavy cruisers (I do not recall any of their names) and these ships were also firing steadily. One thing 1 recall that surprised me: at night the large guns used flameless powder and all you could see were the red shells streaking across the sky without the fiery blast that sent them off. When naval guns are used in this manner, they can do a lot of damage. Later we were told that our ship destroyed several bridges and some tanks. When we left Sicily, our Captain put a broom on the mast-head signifying we had made a clean sweep. He also had some bridges and tanks painted on the bridge of the ship.

We came into several different ports in the U. S. upon our return from escorting convoys, but the chief port was the Brooklyn Navy Yard. For the first time, I was able to get dates with American girls, and 1 have to confess that some of those New York girls were just about as pretty as our beautiful southern girls. One date was with a WAVE, and it occurred in this way. Violet Barksdul (Edith's cousin) was one of the Midway girls 1 knew and she was almost like a sister. She had joined the WAVES and was then in New York. 1 got in touch with her and she introduced me to one of her friends. I, in tum, introduced her to one of my shipmates and

we double-dated one evening. We went to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel to eat, and I saw right off that I could not afford much that they had on their menu. All of us ordered the cheapest things they had, and we had just enough to pay. We gave the waiter no tip, and he was very angry, but we had to explain that we simply did not have any more money That was an embarrassing episode.

Another time, my shipmate and I were going down one of the main streets in Manhattan and we came to a sign that said, "Radio City." We went in, and saw no one taking tickets, so we took a seat in front of a stage that would revolve, and as I recall, it would also raise and lower to show different shows. We saw several shows of dogs doing tricks, and various other magical kind of shows. We really enjoyed it, but decided that since it was free, it could not be all that much, so we left. Later I figured out that we must have gone in by the back door, and since we had on many battle ribbons, nobody had the heart to stop us.

Mter I went aboard the Laub, I was allowed to strike for shipfitter, and within a few months I was able to take an examination for SF 3/c, which I easily passed. I felt that my fortunes were really going up aboard the Laub. Not only was my pay increased, but now as a non-commissioned officer I had many privileges which I did not have before. I enjoyed the ship-fitting work, and I liked the people I worked with.

Once our ship came into Boston, and I was assigned to temporary Military Police duty one evening. The sailors from our ship were pretty much well behaved, so I did not have any particular trouble. Another port we came into was at New London, Connecticut. It was from there that I got my first leave for home in more than three years. It was about the middle of August when we came into port, and we were to be there long enough for everyone to take about three days leave. Since I had not been home for so long, the other SF 3/c offered to let me have his leave, and I could make it home by airplane on the combined six days. The deck officer approved this arrangement, and it took about 7 hours by air to reach Shreveport. When I got off the plane, I was so glad to be on Louisiana soil that I kissed the ground. *Mter* about 14 more hours by bus, and walking the last couple of miles, I reached home. It was about 10 o'clock, and Mama and Dad were in bed. I yelled out "Mama," and Mama said to Dad, "It's Richard." Everyone was glad to see me, but I learned that it was far different for me than when Herbert came home back in December of 1942. When he came home, Forest Hill High School had a convocation to hear him talk about his exploits in the Pacific, and then the whole community gave a picnic to honor him. Few people other than my family noticed when I came home. Such are the fortunes of war. Strangely enough, this did not seem of great importance to me.

I left in time to make it back on my scheduled flight, but when I got to Shreveport, an Army General needed to take my seat, and I was bumped. I finally got a plane, but got aboard the ship about three hours late. This was the only time I had to go before the Captain's Mast while I was in the Navy. The Captain said that I was in the wrong by not allowing more time, but he let me off without any punishment, for which I was grateful.

We made only about one more trip across the Atlantic before I applied for training at a

welding school in Portsmouth, Va. and I was accepted. About that time, I learned that fleet personnel could apply for the V-7 Pilot Training Program, and I also applied for that. I was told that it might be several months before I would learn whether I was accepted or rejected.

I had an unusual experience in leaving the Laub. There was a sailor of Polish descent we called "Ski" who had been on the Oklahoma, and was picked up from the oily water at the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and on that account, he and I became fairly good friends. One day he had come to me asking to borrow money: it seems that his family at home was in desperate straits and he wanted to help out. I lent him all I could; as I recall, it was about ten dollars, and he said he would pay me back in a few weeks. The weeks turned into months, and still he did not repay me. As a consequence, I got to the point that I did not like him, and even tried to avoid talking with him. I figured he was just like Pimp Wilson, a welsher. But on my last day aboard, just as I was leaving, he came around to help me carry my sea-bag and he gave me back my ten dollars.

Life was smooth and uncomplicated in the welding school, and I suppose I actually learned to weld. But as circumstances worked out, I was never able to use that skill. About the only noteworthy experience I had at the school was the time I decided to go out with the fellows and drink beer. So many sailors would brag about drinking so many quarts of beer, and talk about the fun they had, that I decided to try it. I just sat at the table as they did, and drank all I could hold, and then more. The upshot of this was I got as sick as I have ever been. It seemed that I was spiraling downward and downward forever. I have never touched beer since.

I learned while I was there that I could apply for the Navy V-12 Officer Training Program, which would entail four years of college, and which was exactly what I wanted. I told the educational officer that I had already applied for V-7 but he said that was OK, I could apply for V-12 as well. I took the exam for the V-12 and passed, but about that time orders came through for the V-7. I had a minor physical situation which could be repaired by surgery and that delayed my departure for about three weeks. On the day I was to leave, orders came through for my V-12 training at the University of Richmond, which I very much wanted to take. The Chief Petty Officer in charge said I had too many irons in the fire: he insisted that I take the pilot training, but the educational officer saved me. I think there is a good chance that I would not have survived the war had I taken the pilot training, because those men were being trained and sent to war in the Pacific after only a short period. I knew from my own observation that the pilots were taking the brunt of the war. But for me, it was off to Richmond on January 1, 1944.

At the University, I entered into an entirely new kind of life: this was truly one of the happiest and most exciting times I can remember. I loved the beauty of the place. I loved being able to date the nice girls at Westhampton across the lake and up the hill. They had a sign painted on the side of the hill for us. It said, "It is a hard climb, but it is worth it." I loved the academic life. The studies were challenging because my high school had not prepared me well, but with a good deal of work, they were not too difficult for me. My room-mate was Gregory Trelevyn, and though he was a few years younger than I, he was a prince of a fellow. It was

something new to me that I could leave money laying about and not have to worry that someone would take it: in the fleet, all of us would sleep with our bill-folds under our pillows for fear they would be stolen. To be called "Mister" by the teachers, and the Navy personnel, and to be treated with respect by almost everyone was almost unbelievable to me.

Probably the biggest change from my former life was in the language. On board ship, about every other word was either a gutter word or language that refined people would not speak:. You never heard that kind of language used at the university. Once I was on a double date with another of the trainees and two girls from Westhampton, and on the way back from taking the girls to their dormitory, my friend asked me if I knew what I said when I was speaking about one of the professors. I said no, and when I heard what I had called him (an old bastard), I decided then and there that I would be careful never to use that kind of language again. I have held to this promise.

I also learned a little about prejudice. I dated one girl named Jackie Barnes, which had an Anglo-Saxon sound. When I found out she was Jewish, I suggested to her that we had better not date anymore because of our religious differences. I was talking to some of the men in our dormitory about it, and one of them, a really nice fellow, asked what I had against the Jews. I told him that they were always suspected of sharp business dealing where I grew up, and then he told me he was Jewish. That really embarrassed me. Later I was talking with some other friends, and I told them about the whole episode, and one of them said he, too, was Jewish. I made an inward resolution to never run down people of another race. I have pretty much held that promise as well.

One other lesson I remember and that was a lesson in humility. Another trainee and I were watching some Westhampton girls play badminton, and it seemed to me that they were breaking some rules. In fact, I did not know much at all about the game, but I thought I did. I tried to correct one of the girls, and the other one said that she was the collegiate state champion in the sport. I quietly walked away.

It was at the University of Richmond that I began to attend church regularly. Some Baptist boys invited me to go with them to the First Baptist Church where the Reverend Theodore Adams was pastor. I have never heard better preaching anywhere, and I began to realize for the first time that church worship has a value for me. Even though I did not join the Baptist church then or later because of some differences I have with their doctrines, yet because of this experience I have never been out of the church for very long since that time.

The days of the freshman class were ended at Richmond after two semesters, and we were transferred to Duke University in Durham, N. C., changed over to the Navy R. O. T. C., and given a new kind of uniform similar to those the cadets wear in Annapolis. This added a lot of prestige since regular sailors would think we were officers and they would salute us. Also, I think we looked real sharp with those uniforms. As I had become good friends with a boy from the fleet named Robert Todd at Richmond, we asked to room together at Duke, and were assigned a room high up in a tower. This worked out fine until winter came, and I learned that

Todd, who was from New Jersey, was a fresh air fiend, and we had windows that opened in all four directions which he wanted to keep open. We began to have trouble getting along, and I asked for a transfer from that room. The officer in charge said he really sympathized with me: he came from Arkansas, and he did not like the cold temperatures we were having in North Carolina and he certainly would not want his windows open at night. At any rate, the matter was taken up before the Captain of our station, and the officer from Arkansas repeated how he was sympathetic with my cause. However, he got our names mixed up and he kept saying that he grew up as Todd did, and he completely understood his feeling about the matter. I did not see any way that I could bring out his mistake, and I still don't. However, it turned out all right and I was transferred.

Between the time I applied for the welding school and the time the school actually started, there was an interval of about thirty days when I had no particular duties, so I applied for leave and was granted it. The only trouble was that I had spent most of my money on airfare for the previous 6 day leave, and I hardly had enough for trainfare home on the longer leave. Over the three year period, I had accumulated about ninety days leave, so from then on, I took the maximum leave whenever the opportunity presented itself, such as between semesters, and I got to go home many times. I always was nearly broke, but that was not all that important to me as long as I could see my folks.

I continued to enjoy life and my studies at Duke, but during my second semester there in the spring of 1945, I developed a very peculiar kind of disease. One of my joints would become extremely tender and swollen, to the point that I could hardly endure moving it. Mter about a week or so, the joint would become normal, but the pain would transfer to another joint. Meantime, we were under a rather vigorous exercise program, and I found some of the exercises almost unbearable. My resistance to doing exercises that caused such pain soon brought me into conflict with the petty officer in charge, but this conflict did not last long. A young medical student suggested that I go to see the doctor about it, and when I did, he said I had rheumatic fever and my heart was affected: I would need complete bed rest. This diagnosis effectually ended my navy career.

I was in the Duke hospital for two months, and my prescription was four aspirin every four hours all during that time, and I was supposed to stay in bed, but I would sneak up to use the bathroom. I was then put on a bus for Portsmouth, Va. (right out of complete bed rest on to a crowded bus, no less) and I would have had to stand if one of the nurses on board had not recognized me and insisted that I take her place. At the Portsmouth Naval Hospital I was again put on complete bed rest. I stayed there for about two more months, and was given an honorable discharge for medical reasons on July 21, 1945.

CHAPTER VIII

OUT OF THE NAVY AND INTO MARRIAGE

I was pretty much dispirited when I left the Navy. I felt that I might not have all that much longer to live and I even considered going out to Arizona where the weather was supposed to be good for people in my condition. Instead, I hung around home and helped Dad build a small house up near Robert's place on some land I had given him. He planned to sell his place in the lower community, and to live in the small house while he built a better home for himself and Mama.

In the fall of 1945 I enrolled in L. S. U. under the G. I. Bill to work for a degree in petroleum engineering. I made right good grades, but I do remember having a hard time identifying rocks in the geology class. In the geology class there was a very pretty girl named Betty Miller from Arkansas who sat in the desk next to mine, and I got to know her fairly well. One Friday afternoon, I called and asked her if she would like to go to a movie that night, and she said she would love to but she already had a date for a movie. She said, however, that the night would still be young and we could go somewhere after the movie. I had something else that I had to do that evening, but as I really wanted to date her, I said perhaps I could take her to dinner before the movie. She said she already had another date for dinner. I decided that she really did have too many irons in the fire, so I never tried to date her again.

I was room-mates with a young man from Shreveport named James Malloy who was also taking petroleum engineering, and we became good friends. We even bought a 36 Plymouth together. James was very smart, much better than I in making grades, and at the end of the school year at L. S. U. he convinced me that we should go to the Colorado School of Mines near Denver where we could get a better education.

We took temporary jobs as waiters during the summer of '46 at Lande's which sold both food and drinks, and we had to wear tuxedos. We made a good deal of money in tips, more than enough to pay for our food and lodging. But when we applied for entrance into the School of Mines, I was not accepted: the great number of veterans making application there right after the war had made it necessary for them to admit only Colorado residents. James had been born in Colorado and so he was accepted. Instead of enrolling at Golden, I sold my half of the plymouth to him, and decided to go to Oakland, California to live with my brother Herbert and his wife Marguerite. I planned to attend the University of California in Berkeley.

About a week before I was to leave, I saw an ad in the paper from a woman who said she was going to San Francisco at that time, and as she had a large car and was taking her two daughters and a gentleman friend, she had room for one more. She would only charge $ 25.00 for the trip. I could use the money that I would save over bus fare, so I called her, and arranged to make the trip with them. In so doing, I ran into one of the most singular experiences that I could ever imagine. I began to detect something a little strange when I first lit up a cigarette. At that time, smoking in a closed car was socially acceptable, but she immediately told me that

I could not smoke. We were already on our way and I couldn't back out, so I asked her what I could do. She said that I could hold the cigarette out of the window and stick my head out of the window to smoke, which I did. Later we came to a gasoline station way out in the desert somewhere, and she began to talk in a horsey manner to the lady at the station. The lady at the station told her she could take her business elsewhere. When the woman asked her where the next station was, she said it was fifty miles down the road. *Mter* much apologizing, we got some gas.

When we came to the high mountains near Yosemite National Park, there was an old Model A truck filled with a load of furniture trying to make it up the hill coming toward us. A woman and several children were pushing the truck to get it up the mountain, and the husband was driving. The road there had only one lane, but back down the road about 30 yards was a place to pull over. The woman in our car drove right up face to face with them, and she began to sit on her horn, trying to force that poor family to back down, which they finally did. That night we got to Yosemite, and even though it was only late August, it was getting nippy at night. The woman told me that they would sleep in the car (also, they had brought blankets for themselves), but there was no room for me; I would have to sleep on the ground. I argued with her, but as I saw no recourse, I pulled up some straw and leaves and got under that. But I remember well that I was very cold that night. The next day we came to San Francisco, and I told her that I wanted out of her car at the first bus stop. I was glad to have her out of my life.

I had no trouble enrolling in the University of California, but I did have trouble with at least one of the courses. I was still in petroleum engineering, and one requirement was a chemistry course in quantitative analysis. I simply could not work things out in that course, and it was obvious I was going to make a C which I considered almost as failing. Also, I had begun to feel uncomfortable about living with Herbert and Marguerite: despite their insistence that I live with them, I don't think Marguerite ever felt good about having another person in her house. So taking all things into consideration, I decided to leave the university after about two months, and return home to Forest Hill.

At home, I answered an ad for a trainee in the Seismograph Service Company of Tulsa, which looked for oil by determining the depth of underground strata, and I was accepted. The crew I was put with worked out of Duncan, Oklahoma for about four months, and then moved to Altus, Oklahoma. I held various jobs on the crew; sometimes helping to clear brush, at other times helping the surveyor, and at times placing the solenoids which recorded the sound after explosions were set off. I enjoyed working with the crew, and enjoyed the outside work we were doing.

My favorite work was with the surveyor even though I was nothing more than the surveyor's helper. Most usually we were measuring distance with a surveyor's chain, or helping the surveyor lug his instruments to obscure places. The surveyor's name was Jerry Hancock, and he was really a nice fellow. Occasionally he let me work his plane table, so I learned a good deal about surveying. But Jerry also had some funny ways; at least it seemed so to me. For instance, once we came to a barbed wire fence, and it came nearly to my waist. I had always

been good at "flat-footed" jumping; that is, standing in place and jumping, without any leverage from running. I told Jerry that I thought I could flat-foot jump over that fence, and he bet me a dollar that I couldn't. So I took off my heavy boots, jumped as high as I could, and sure enough, I cleared the fence. But Jerry refused to give me the dollar. He said that I had changed the conditions of the bet when I took off my boots. I learned an important lesson there: not everybody's understanding of reality is the same.

The main professional on the crew was the computer, who was a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines. His work was to take the raw data we got from the field and interpret it so that a determination could be made of the topography of the underlying strata. In this way, it could be determined whether oil was likely to be trapped underneath, and determine its location. This work looked interesting, so I decided that on my return to college in the fall, I would major in math and perhaps become a computer with a seismograph company.

I made good money working with the seismograph company, and saved most of it. I had about five hundred dollars in my pocket when I was traveling home by bus. It turned out that I had a long delay in Shreveport, and I went down to the used car lot just to look. Cars were not yet in plentiful supply after World War II, but I did see a '39 chevrolet that had a good price, about $ 400.00, and I decided to buy it. I had only driven it about fifty miles toward home when it "burned a rod," as I was told. The mechanic I took it to told me that this car had the worst motor he had ever seen: he said it must have been recovered from a junk heap. He advised me to buy some cheap oil, and keep feeding it plenty of oil until I got it home, and get it fixed there, which I did. The overhaul of the motor cost about $ 100.00 more, and that would have been fine if it had gotten the car in good shape. But I had trouble with that car as long as I kept it, and was glad to sell it after about a couple of months for $ 300.00.

Just before I met Madge, I had an interesting experience across the river from Baton Rouge at Addis, La. I had enrolled again in L.S.V., and as I had sold my car, I could only go home by hitchhiking or by taking the bus. I was not too anxious to hitchhike that far, and the bus schedule was really bad. I found out that if I hitchhiked a few miles over to Addis, I could then take a train right to LeCompte which had a good schedule and a reasonable price, so that is what I decided to do. Hitchhiking over, I was picked up by three pentecostal ministers. Right off, one of them asked me if I was saved. I told them I had been attending the Baptist church, but they said that was not what they asked: they wanted to know whether or not I was saved. I could not give them enough assurance on this point, so one of them said to the driver; "Let's stop and pray for the brother." So all three got out and knelt by the side of the road and began to pray. I saw another car coming, so I held out my thumb, and was immediately picked up again, thus leaving the ministers to their prayers. In Addis, I learned that the evening train would be about seven o'clock, and as it was only about five, I would have a two hour wait. I asked the depot agent if there was a restaurant in Addis, and he said there wasn't; however, I could get food at the local boarding house about two blocks away. Soon after I came to the boarding house and was eating, a large group of men came in. They were big; they were smelly; and they were angry. It seems that a black man who worked on the river boat with them had been a soldier in Germany and over there he had lived with a white woman. He said

that he could have any white woman in Addis that he wanted, and they were steamed up about it. They were gathering together into little groups, and I heard them talking about stringing him up. I tried to ignore them, but finally one or two came over to me, and began to tell me about it, and tried to involve me. I told them I was a southerner, but I did not believe in lynching. Soon the whole crowd of them was around me. The largest of them all, a burly looking man with boots that hung down near his ankles, told me that he was from Mississippi, and that his grandparents had some "niggers" working for them that they trusted like members of the family. But one night they attacked his grandparents with an axe, cut them up, and tried to bum them in a stove. The man concluded by saying, "They'll cut off your head, and they'll drink your blood." By that time, I was getting a little apprehensive about what they would do to me if I refused to go in with them. But it was just at this moment that I heard the train whistle blowing. I quickly paid for my meal, and I ran as fast as I could to the train station. I never was so glad to see a train.

Back at L.S.V., I changed my major to mathematics. This required me to take a foreign language, and I chose to take Spanish. But as I was not doing as well as I would have liked, I decided to also attend the night Spanish class to help me do better. It was there at the night class that I met Madge Mixon, the lovely Osyka, Mississippi girL

I came early to the night Spanish class, and standing outside the classroom were two girls, one of whom was Madge. The above described event had just happened to me, and I began to tell these two strange girls about it. They did not seem all that interested. Mter I attended the class a few weeks, I decided I would like to date Madge, but I did not know how to get in with her. So what I decided to do was ignore her, but try to get popular with others. In this way I hoped to make her jealous. Trying to become popular worked all right, at least on one person; the largest and least attractive person in the class. This person actually cornered me into taking her to a movie, which gave Madge and the others a good chance to have a little fun; at least later when I got to know Madge, she teased me a good deal about it. Finally, I learned that Madge worked at the First Presbyterian Church as the secretary, and I learned also that they were going to have a wiener roast for young college age people. I asked her if I could go with her, and then on the day we were supposed to go, I called her. She said that she thought I was joking, and she had a date with somebody else. I was about give up on Madge, but she said to call her a little later, and she would see what she could do. The upshot of all this was that we did go together, and that soon we began to date only one another.

It was not long until we began to talk of marriage. I told Madge that I planned to get a well paying job in oil exploration in South America for a few years, and then marry later. My idea was to finish in math, and continue in seismograph work, and I felt that if I acquired skills in the Spanish language, I could make use of it also. For her part, Madge did not seem to be in a hurry to be married either. Yet, as both of us determined that we were for each other, our plans began to change, and within two or three months we were planning to get married before I got out of schooL Her job at the church and my stipend from the Veterans Administration would give us enough to squeak by.

Our path to matrimony was not without some blips along the way. For example, on one Sunday morning Madge received a beautiful bouquet of flowers, and the note simply said "From your new friend." Naturally she thought they were from me, and she carried on a lot about it. It really embarrassed me to tell her that I was not responsible, and then she too was embarrassed. She decided they must have been from her former boy-friend Joe Lipko, whom I did not even know about until this happened. It seems that she had gone with him a lot during the war, and he really thought they were to going to get married. I understand that he even changed his religion from Catholic to Presbyterian in that belief. But Madge felt that he was far more confident than she was that this was the way their relationship would tum out. At any rate, the flower episode helped to seal his doom with her, I think.

Before marriage, Madge and I decided that we needed to meet one another's families. It was about Christmas when I went with Madge to Osyka, and I will always remember the strange sounding names that the bus driver called out along the way: Ameet(Amite), Roseland, Tangipahoa, Fluker, Kentwood, and Osyka. When we got to the station, a small boy about ten years old came running over across the street (her home was diagonally across the street from the bus station) to meet us and to carry our luggage. This was her brother Don, a real prince of a fellow. He seemed so happy to do it, but Madge let me know that he expected a small tip: I imagine her other boy friends she brought home were not so tight as I. Anyway, I was very impressed with her family, at the real happiness that seemed to be there, and also their deep religious faith.

Madge was received well at Forest Hill: all my family seemed to really like her. Perhaps they were not quite used to girls being so refined as Madge was. Robert asked her if I had told her about our life, by which I suppose he meant that we were very much country people. Even after he enlightened her about some of our country ways, Madge was able to look over this aspect of my character. I remember that it was on New Year's night at the end of 1947 that Madge and I were sitting in the swing on the front porch, and Dad was in a rocking chair. He told us that on that particular night, all the cows were supposed to kneel at exactly 12. We went out at that time to look, but we saw nothing to substantiate this folklore.

Madge wanted me to talk to her father about our marriage, and I guess she wanted me to ask for her hand in marriage. I did not exactly do that, but when Mr. Mixon and I were alone, I told him that Madge and I planned to be married and that we would like to have his approval. He then gave me a talk on marriage, and the main import of what he said was that to be successful, there must be three involved in the partnership, the two being married and God. With that arrangement, he said, a marriage can withstand any troubles that come. Without God, a marriage can fall apart for the least of reasons. I believed him then, and still do. Madge and I have always included the Lord in our relationship.

There were others from the First Presbyterian Church, mainly some of the elders that Madge knew, who also wanted to give me advice. One of them advised me to always take coffee to Madge in bed. It seemed to me that she was known by half the people in Baton Rouge, and all of them wanted to be sure she was getting a good husband.

It was bitterly cold at the time we were married, on January 29, 1948. Madge had been renting a room from Dr. and Mrs. H. W. A. Lee, and we were to continue rooming there. That night there was an ice storm, and the front steps were covered. Mrs. Lee had to get. rid of the ice by pouring boiling water on it. My brother Wallace was the best man, and he transported me from my room at L.S.U. down to First Presbyterian Church where the wedding was to take place, in his old 1939 LaSalle. Wallace never passed up a hitchhiker, and that evening they were out in droves. We had allowed a little extra time, but he made about five stops to pick them up. When we got downtown, they asked if he would mind going on to Florida Street, which was about three blocks farther than we needed to go. Wallace was glad to oblige. Then they got off, one by one. I was a nervous wreck when we got to the church.

The whole affair was in grand style, but to be truthful, there are only two things I remember about the wedding. One was how beautiful Madge looked as she was coming down the aisle, and the other was how scared I was. My knees were actually knocking together. I do not know why I was so scared, unless it was that I began to realize that now I would have a good deal more responsibility than I ever had before.

Mter the reception, Madge and I went to "Toot and Tell It," a drive-in fast food place, and I began to relax for the first time in a while. We had borrowed Wallace's LaSalle, and it had been a fine car in its time; much like a cadillac. But now it was old, and an oil burner. It was this car we used the next day on our honeymoon trip to Houston, Texas. We had to stop more for oil than we did for gas. One thing I remember about the trip other than stopping for oil: the beautiful icicles in all the trees. We stopped in Eunice (about eighty miles distance) and sent post cards to friends. We made it as far as Beaumont for our second night together, and the third evening we rolled into Houston, where there was a downtown parade going on, and Gene Autry was singing on the front plaza of the Rice Hotel.

MUSTER ROLL OF THE CREW

of the U.S.S. [illegible]

for the [illegible] ending December 28, 1941

[illegible]

Commemorative Ceremony
Honoring
The Survivors of the Attack of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941
George Bush Gallery oftbe Natioaal Museum ofthe Pacific War

Ceremony will begin al 11:15 a.m.

Welcome:	*Cliff Rohertson* - Master of Ceremonies
Music:	*Air Force Band ofthe West* *Fredericksburg High School Band*
	Live Broadcast of Ceremony from the *USS Arizona* Flyover and Missing Man Formation of F-J8's
Post Colors:	*Joint Color Guard --- Fort Sam Houston*
National Anthem:	*.kry/ ' Hoover*
Pledge of Allegiance:	*William Nicholas* - *Eagle Scout. BSA Troop* IJII
Acknowledgements:	*Kenneth L Bllrenga* - Chairman. Admiral Nimitz Foundation
Remarks:	*The Honorahle Rick Perry* - Governor of Texas
Keynote Address:	*The Honorable George Bush* Former President of the United States
Music:	*Fredericksburg Middle School and High School*
Remarks:	Introduction of *Sons and Daughters of World War II Veterans* *RADM* CD, *Grojean. USN (Ret.)* Executive Director, Admiral Nimitz Foundation
Benediction:	*Reverend Dr. Richard Young* - Pearl Harbor Survivors Assn.
Presentation of Wreath:	*Former President Bush. William Nicholas. Dr. Young*
	21-Gun Salute
Taps:	*Air Force Band ofthe West*
Interpreters for the Deaf:	*Ginger Bennell. Cynthia Harp*

SOME IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS;The Worden's roster of the crew on Dec" 28,1941 shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack containing both Richard and Herbert Young's names; a bulletin showing Richard Young on the podium with ex-president George Bush; the Marriage License of Richard Young and Madge Mixon, and Richard Young's Certificate of Ordination.

Marriage License

State of Louisiana—Parish of East Baton Rouge
Nineteenth Judicial District Court
Clerk's Office

To Anyone Authorized to Celebrate Marriage—Greeting:

YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED to join in Marriage according to law

RICHARD OLIVER YOUNG

and MADGE MIXON

there appearing no lawful cause of impediment to the same.

Given under my hand and seal of said Court, at Baton Rouge,

this 26th day of January, A. D. 1948

S. V. WATSON, Clerk of Court

Per [signature] Deputy Clerk.

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

Be it known, That by virtue of the above License from the Clerk of the District Court in and for said Parish, I have celebrated the Rites of Matrimony between

Mr. Richard Oliver Young

Miss Madge Mixon

the parties named in said license, on this 29th day of January, 1948 in said Parish, in presence of three lawful witnesses.

In testimony whereof, witness the signatures of the said parties, the three witnesses and my official signature, made on the date named herein.

WITNESSES:	PARTIES AND OFFICER:
Mrs. J. L. Slocum	Richard Oliver Young
Joseph B. Mixon	Madge Mixon
Benjamin Wallace Young Sr.	John W. Melton

Certificate of Ordination

The Presbytery of [illegible]

having examined for the ministry under the provisions of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States,

Mr [illegible]

[illegible], and his examinations having been approved, then in due order the Presbytery solemnly ordained and set apart by imposition of hands and prayer, the said Mr. [illegible]

to the holy office of the Gospel ministry, and afterwards extended to him the right hand of fellowship to take part with them in this ministry,

[illegible] the nineteenth

day of [illegible] 196[illegible] A. D.

[signature]
Stated Clerk of Presbytery

[illegible]

Chapter IX

STARTING OUR FAMILY

Madge and I continued to rent our room at the Lees for about three months, and we usually ate breakfast at the Toddle House, about a block down the street. We would eat lunch at our work place, and then eat together, usually at the Picadilly cafeteria, for the evening meal. But we soon tired of eating out every meal, and began to look around for an apartment. About that time, one of the members of the First Presbyterian Church who lived next door to the governor's mansion had a furnished upstairs apartment become available for rent. It overlooked her beautiful flower garden, and across the hall a young law student, Gillis Long and his wife Kathy, would be our immediate neighbors. The rent was only thirty dollars monthly, so we felt fortunate to get it.

A problem arose, and it came about because of some peculiar ways of thinking that I had developed probably in my childhood. It had been my contention even in the Navy (some of my Navy letters that my mother saved reveal my thoughts about the matter) that no wife should work out: they should stay home and keep the family. Of course, we could not have been married if Madge had not worked. At first, she continued to work for the church, but for various reasons, she soon decided that she no longer wished to work there, so she got a job with the state at the capital. When she had worked at the church, she had to walk only about three blocks to the job, but to work at the capital, she would have to walk several blocks for a bus, then do more walking at the capital. Often there was bad weather. The problem arose in this way: a young man at the capital came right near our place every morning and evening, and he offered to take her, and then bring her home. She wanted to know what I thought, and I was opposed. It did not seem right to me. As years passed, I became ashamed that I was so selfish, but at that time, I thought I was doing the right thing. Life has been in large part a learning process for me.

We got along with the Longs, but never became their close friends. I did help Kathy with her math a couple of times, and I rode to the campus with Gillis a few times, but other than that we had few connections with them. In later years, when Gillis became a congressman, I wrote to him and he responded immediately: he said that he had wondered what had happened to me. When he died, I sent Kathy a letter of condolence, and I received a printed form in return.

I was taking night classes at L.S.U. as well as day classes in an effort to finish up as soon as possible, and one night I came home to find Madge sitting on the top of the back of a kitchen chair. She had been there for more than an hour waiting for me. The reason for her high seating posture? She had seen a mouse and she was deathly afraid of mice. I had to find the mouse and destroy it, and then put out traps before she was satisfied.

I joined the church soon after Madge and I married, but I wasn't a member at the First Church very long: Soon after Madge left her job at the church we decided to change our membership to the University Presbyterian Church. I think it was sometime in the spring of 1949. Again, this meant another bus ride since we had no car. However, new cars had by now begun

to roll off the assembly lines, and we put in our name for one. It was 1951 before we got our new 1952 Chevrolet Bel Air.

In the fall of 1949 I was taking my final courses as a senior at L.S.V. and I really did not know what I intended to do. The job of being a computer in the seismograph work did not seem to be all that attractive anymore, because it required a move about every four months, and I had not prepared for anything else specifically. It was about this time that one of my professors, Dr. Smith, asked me what I planned to do. After I told him of my uncertainty, he asked me if I would like to continue on in math and work for a Doctor's Degree. He said he could get me a teaching assistantship if I wished to do this. I talked it over with Madge, and both of us thought it was a good idea. I was to start in the spring semester of 1950.

The reason Dr. Smith wanted me to be a doctoral student was his belief that I understood his brand of mathematics. It is true that I could make a good grade under him, and I could prove his convoluted theorems, but the truth is, I never did really understand what he was trying to do. I do know that his math was unlike the math of any other professor, or any mathematics I have seen before or after. Probably for this reason, after his death a couple of years later I had a very difficult time making good grades under other professors. But I never made less than an A under Dr. Smith, and on account of this straight A record, I was chosen for the Phi Kappa Phi Honorary Society in 1951.

I still remember the nervousness I felt when I went to teach my first class. We met in a T (for temporary) building, which had formerly been an army barrack, and this gave me an opportunity to walk a couple of blocks to relax, but my nervousness did not abate. Once when I had been a child and was walking with Essie Dee near a home in the backwoods after dark, we were afraid and she said we should whistle and that would help. Well, I tried whistling on the way to the T building, but I was none the calmer. At any rate, I put my name in large letters on the black board as professors are supposed to do, and my class began. It was not long before I was really enjoying teaching.

It was about the fall of 1949 that Madge and I decided to move to the T building apartments at L. S. V. This would put us closer to the church we attended, and to my classes. But that winter, when the air was very humid, and the outside air was cold, a tremendous amount of moisture would build up on the thin floors of our apartment. Because of this, we were ill with bad colds and the flu several times that winter. We stayed there for about a year and moved in the fall of 1950 to a small apartment on Iris Street near L.S.V.

During 1950 another math professor named Dr. Wang came from China on a temporary basis, and his field of math was topology. He became interested in me, and suggested to me that if I wanted to work for a Master's Degree in topology, he knew a problem the solution of which would probably get me the degree. I decided to talk to Dr. Smith about it and he encouraged me to do it. I received the Master's degree in May of 1951. It was not long after that that Dr. Smith died, and all of his students, including myself, were left without a major professor. It was then that I found out the political clout that such a professor can carry. Before his death, if a

student were approved by Dr. Smith for a doctorate, he had no worries. He was assured of passing all examinations, and getting the degree. But after Dr. Smith's death, it became a new ball game. Not a single one of Dr. Smith's students that were in process of getting a Doctor's Degree was able to go on and pass all the exams. Eventually one named Joe Smith did get a degree, but it was only through the help of some Princeton mathematicians that he was able to.

During the summer of 1951 Madge and I were able to get our new car, and we decided to take a trip out west in it. Madge's two brothers, Paul and Don, never had much opportunity to go on trips of any kind, and she suggested that we take them, and I was glad we could. She also wanted to take Sonny, her sister Sis's son, and he would make a small contribution to the expense. So we left for a quick tour of the west during the summer of '51, with three young teen-age boys.

Before I had gotten out of the Navy, I had developed a migraine headache condition that continued to worsen with time. During the trip out west, there were times that my head ached so much that tears would continue to run down my face. The least noise would cause the intensity to increase, so there were times that I must have been awfully hard to live with. I remember with great pleasure the scenery at Pike's Peak, the Royal Gorge, Yellowstone Park, Bryce Canyon, the Grand Canyon, and Carlsbad Caverns which we saw on our grand tour. Two or three experiences stand out. One was the time that Don ordered a large glass of orange juice, which was probably the highest thing on the menu. As I recall, he offered it to one of us, saying that he did not really want it; he just thought it came with the meal. Don has always been a self-effacing diplomat of a person; he really did want that orange juice, but wanted us to feel free to share in it with him. Another experience was at Yellowstone, when Paul got out of the car and chased a bear up the mountain. Also at Yellowstone, we stayed at one of the park cabins, and that night we all shivered under light covers. August might be warm down south, but it is not always so up north. We had a wonderful time on this two week tour.

I decided to stay in L.S.U. and continue work under Dr. Wade, the head of the math department, but I soon found out that all the mathematics I had taken under Dr. Smith did me little good under Dr. Wade. It was almost like getting started again, only more difficult because by now my mind was pretty much set in a definite way of thinking. I was no longer making straight A's; now there were an equal number of B's. In the spring of 1952, Dr. Wade wanted me to take a special course in imaginary number theory under a young Princetonian, Dr. Hawley, and of course, I had no alternative. The upshot of this was that I made my first C in graduate school,which was tantamount to failure, so I decided to leave the field of mathematics.

My first job as a college graduate was with the Guaranty Income Life Insurance Company of Baton Rouge. I worked under the Actuary, Mr. Ray, and was an actuary trainee. Mr. Ray was a fine Christian man, and had a degree in Actuarial Science and seemed to take an interest in me. I believe I learned far more about the actuarial profession there, and the way an office ought to be run, than at any other place I worked.

I had many interesting experiences at my first job. One was a conflict that seemed to

arise between myself and a lady who had been with the company since its beginning, and was Mr. Ray's secretary. She was an older lady with a bull-dog expression. Even though she was not systematic in all details, she knew where every file was and was an invaluable employee. She looked on me as an upstart, and especially resented the fact that I had an office to myself, and other perks. One day I had about all I could stand of her, and in desperation went into my office, closed the door, and knelt to pray about it. All at once it came to me that this lady could be my biggest ally in learning the business. If I could get on her good side I would have far less trouble learning the trade, and also, perhaps all this hassling would stop. Within a few days, I made it a point to tell her how much I respected her ability, and wanted her to be my mentor. From then on, she became the warmest friend I had there.

It was during the time that I was working there, on February 13, 1952 that our first child was born. I remember being so sleepy that night; Madge was in great pain before we went to the hospital, and needed to time the contractions, but I simply could not stay awake. I felt like Peter, James, and John who deserted Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Nevertheless, when time came to go, I was awake enough for that, and we made it OK. It was such a joy, and matter of pride, when I saw Richie's face, our very own dear boy, that tears came to my eyes. I remember too, how kind everyone was to us, and the gifts they gave for Richie at my office.

But I was making so little money at work, only $275.00 monthly, and now with Madge unable to work, we would have a hard time getting along. I really enjoyed the actuarial work at Guaranty; I was learning to calculate premiums and policy reserves for all kinds of policies; I was learning to write insurance contracts; I was learning how to run an office smoothly. But our company was very small, and it looked as if Mr. Ray would be the actuary for many more years, so when I saw an ad for an actuarial trainee in a larger company in Houston,Texas with a starting salary of $350.00, it looked very interesting. In the interview at Great Southern, I was led to believe that I would be in line for a top executive position, so when I was offered the job, I took it.

I worked in several different sections of the actuarial department at Great Southern, but I did not have the same broad experience there that I had at Guaranty Income Life. Most of my time was spent in the group insurance department, under the supervision of Prue Minter, a cousin of the company's president. Prue was a fine lady, and very good at her job, but sometimes she seemed to be a little erratic. I usually got along with her fine. I had one experience in this department which again taught me some humility, but it also gave me a real desire to learn. In discussing a case with two or three people in the department, I used the word "pharmatutical" for "pharmaceutical," thinking I was using the right word. One of the secretaries almost died laughing, and I wondered what she was laughing about. I realized that I must have made a faux-pas and said nothing at the time. She said,"That's what I think of them too." . Later I looked up the word. I then began to realize how profoundly ignorant I was in some matters, even though I had a Master's Degree in math. I determined then and there to enlarge my vocabulary.

In many ways, I did well in the new job, but soon I learned that politics played a large

part in who received advancements. One young man in the actuarial department did not have nearly so good an education as I, but he did know the president of the company, and he had a very pleasant personality. He passed me right up. Also, about six months after I came on board, a Harvard graduate was hired who had already passed three of the national actuarial examinations, and at that time, I had only passed one. It soon became obvious that he was headed for big things in the company, and it became growingly questionable whether I had much future there. As I had by then become very much interested in the church, and believed that God was directing my affairs, I began to consider the ministry. But the thought occurred to me: could it be that I was giving consideration to the ministry out of the desire to avoid unpleasantries at work, rather than out of dedication to the Lord? I decided to ask God to first let me be a success in the actuarial profession, and when that happened, I would then consider the ministry.

Soon after that prayer, a top consulting actuary in Houston, a Jewish man named Lloyd Friedman whom I barely knew, called to talk to me about ajob opening at a company called Sam Houston Life Insurance Company. This was a small company, but they needed a head actuary. The salary was about 50% more than I was getting, so I took it. I was doing right well there when this same actuary called to tell me of a larger company's need for an actuary, and he said he would recommend me. I talked with the president of that company, the Old National Insurance Company, and he asked me what salary I expected, and again I asked for about 50% more than I was getting. I learned later that they were prepared to pay double what I had asked. In that company, I was not only the actuary, but the overseer of all IBM operations. At last, I was really beginning to ride high.

I had a rather sad experience with one individual in that company. Mr. Leslie had been a top officer in the Texas agency that was responsible for regulating Life Insurance Companies, and after retirement he had come to Old National as comptroller. But Mr. Leslie was from another age; he neither understood ffiM, nor what it could do. He would do by hand all the voluminous calculations that had to be made regarding company reserve, etc. I tried to tell him that we could do all these things in a matter of minutes, but still he would take all his work home with him. The vice president of the company would come around and talk to me about it, but both of us respected Mr. Leslie, and let it go. But Mr. Leslie was beginning to get sore with me, and one day when the president called us into a conference to talk about the problem, Mr. Leslie took about an hour telling him why it had to be done the way he was doing it. Then when the president asked me for my ideas, I started talking, and Mr. Leslie got so angry with me that he pulled his chair up between the president and me. The upshot of all of this was that we not only mechanized all our calculations on the computer, but also installed billing and cash receipts on the computer. All this was done at considerable savings to the company, and at a great saving in time and improved quality of service. But it eventually cost Mr. Leslie his job, for which I was very sorry.

About this time I made a final decision to quit smoking. The first time I quit smoking was on the day of my marriage. I thought that would be a good time to refer back to as the time I had quit. Madge said at that time that I was so nervous that she would have been willing to

buy me some cigarettes. However, I went back to smoking while working on a math project with a physics teacher named LeBeau. He would keep offering me cigarettes until finally I took one. Mter the first one, it became easier to accept another, and fmally I decided that I had better buy my own. But in 1956 all the insurance studies were showing a definite correlation between early death and smoking, so I decided to quit. I went about it logically. Knowing that I am somewhat frugal, I decided to play my desire for avoiding waste against my desire to smoke. I planned to begin by taking exactly ten puffs on a cigarette, and then throwing it away, but to smoke all I wanted. As soon as my usage of cigarettes came down to a pack a day, which I was then using, I would cut the number to nine puffs, and continue this program until I was taking only one puff on each cigarette. The plan worked as I expected: I sure hated to throwaway whole cigarettes, and when I got down to one puff on each cigarette, I made the final step. I have not smoked since but even at my advanced age of 71, I occasionally have dreams that I am smoking.

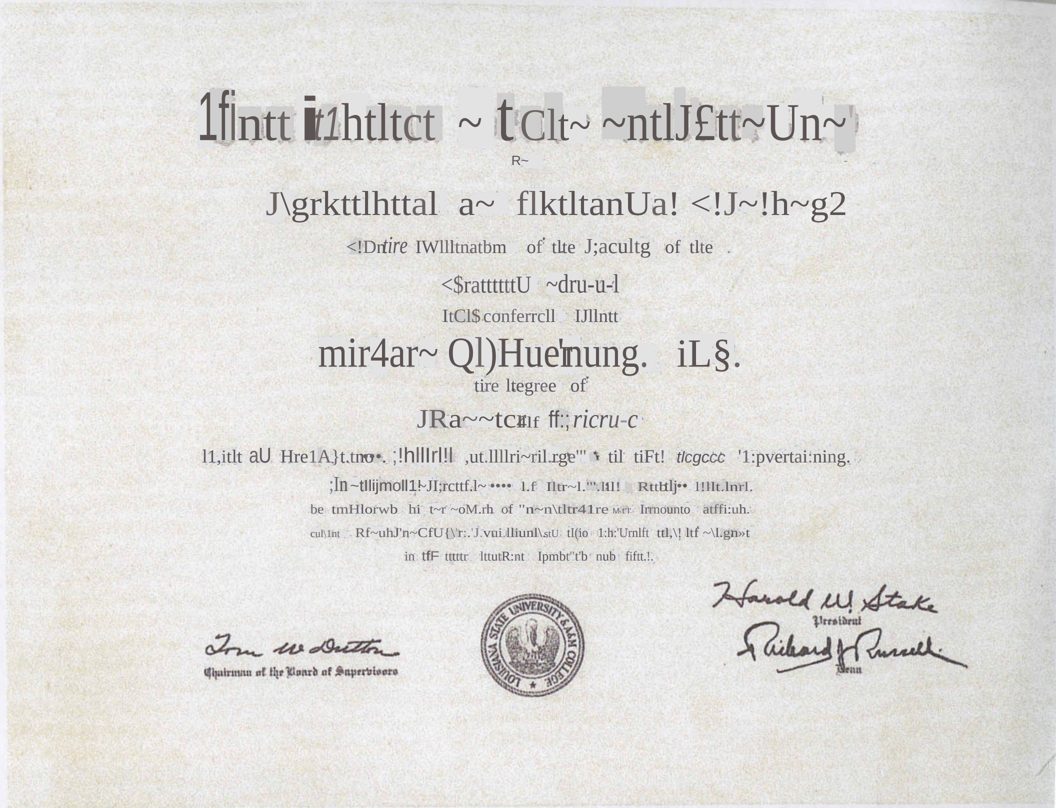
At first in Houston we lived in a nice apartment whose owners, the Banisters, lived in an apartment upstairs. After a time we moved to an upstairs apartment next door which was much more reasonable in price. It was during our time there that Richie caught a bad little disease called impetigo: we figured he must have gotten it from his sand box that a cat liked to lay about in. As a matter of fact, when Rich was very young he had not done very well; he was just about skin and bones at one time. But when the pediatrician put him on a formula called Dexin, he fattened right up. While we were living in our second apartment, our second child Jean was born on Dec. 9, 1954. She was a beautiful little girl, and we named her for Mary Jean McFadden who was then the D.C.E. at First Presbyterian Church in Houston, and had been a friend of Madge at the Assembling Training School in Richmond in 1947. With our growing family, we decided we must have a larger place, so we bought a home out in the northwest part of Houston on 11 th St.

I remember two or three experiences there in our new home. One was the time I took Richie for a treasure hunt in the wooded area next door. Walking through that area, I had noted a large opening in the earth that looked somewhat like a large sunken grave. I put some silver dollars in a jar, and buried them near that place, and I told Richie there was a legend that a pirate had been buried there, but that before he died, he had hidden his loot. So we took a shovel and began to dig about in several places, and finally we came to that place with the silver dollars. I believe that Rich still has them. Also I remember the excitement that Madge had when she killed a snake in our yard there, and I remember how Rudy Beard came over to stay with us a few days, and I tried to get him to help me mow, but he opted out to stay inside by the air-conditioner. We had some wonderful times in our first home.

We were in this home when our third child Sally was born. I remember Mrs. Mildred (Madge's mother) came to help us at that time, and she was so very good and kind to the children. She was an extraordinarily good cook, but I knew that already. Jean had been born at St. Joseph's Hospital, and they had not treated her so well there. In fact, for a few minutes(Madge recalls that it was for much longer) they had misplaced Jean and brought much concern to Madge. But for Sally's birth, we used the Methodist hospital, St. Luke's, and all went well. Sally, like Jean, was a beautiful child, and I do not believe that any parent could have been

blessed with three better, well-behaved, and lovable children than Madge and I had. (No, I am not stretching it.)

In Old National, there were about seven young executives who wanted to take the Life Office Management Association's tests, but were having a difficult time passing them. I offered to teach a class in the subject to help them pass, and this became a regular part of my work. I got along well with all the folks there, and liked my job, but I did not forget the prayer I had made earlier. So in 1957, after working there for about two years, I applied for admission to Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Thus at the age of 35, I began a new career altogether.



National Protestant Chaplain, Pearl Harbor Survivors Association

The Reverend Dr. Richard Young as a native of Louisiana. He graduated from high school in 1939, joined the Civilian Conservation Corps for a year, and then joined the U. S. Navy in August, 1940. He took boot training in San Diego, and was given duty aboard the U.S.S. Worden. His brother Herb later joined the Navy to be with him and the two were together aboard the Worden when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, as well as in the sea battles of Coral Sea, Midway, and Guadalcanal which followed.

In late 1942 Dr. Young transferred to the U.S.S. Laub and was aboard when it participated in the Invasion of Sicily in 1943. In December, 1943 he was selected for officer training in the V-12 program at the University of Richmond, Va. Discharged in 1945 because of medical reasons, he went on to earn both a Bachelor and Master Degree at L.S.U. in mathematics. He entered the ministry in 1960 and his credentials in that profession include both a Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry.

He married Madge Mixon in 1948, and they have fouf children. The first three, Richard Jr., Jean, and Sally, have all established their own homes. The youngest, Thomas Gregory, is in the Class of 1985 at West Point. Dr. and Mrs. Young are now in residence in Louisville, Ky. where he serves as Associate Pastor of Harvey Browne Presbyterian

Left

Introduction when appointed National Chaplain of Pearl Harbor Survivors Ass'n In 1984

Also

Degrees I Have earned

CHAPTER X

A NEW BEGINNING

My decision to enter the ministry was not taken lightly, and I have never regretted it although I believe my natural inclinations might have suited me better to be a teacher, or even an actuary. Because of my lack of "charisma" I probably have not had as much responsibility in the ministry as others with my same capabilities, but I do not discount the value of their ability to influence people. Actually, the quality we call charisma would probably be of great value in achieving success regardless of which calling one wished to follow.

My entrance into the ministry began with my talking with the pastor of the church about it. At the time I was trying to make a decision, we were attending First Presbyterian Church, and Dr. Charles King was the pastor. I tried to make appointments with him several times, even offering to go when I would normally be working, but he was always too busy. Finally he sent his assistant, Tom Lovett, around to interview both Madge and me, and Tom tried to discourage me. He said that unless a person was absolutely sure that this was what he wanted to do, he had better not do it. Soon after this, Madge and I moved to our home out on 11th Street, and we decided to change churches and join the nearby Third Presbyterian Church. They did need us there, and I made a contribution to the church by serving as a deacon, but I believe the decision to move our membership hurt my chances for support later. First Church was very wealthy, and in all likelihood, would have given us aid in the seminary if we had retained our membership there. Madge and I had a vested interest in our home and some savings, but we really could have used some help in undertaking three years of study in the seminary virtually without pay. We received no support from Third Church and the support we received from other sources turned out to be very meager.

The first problem after making the decision was which seminary to attend. I was conservative in my leanings, and believed that Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Ga. would be just right for me, but the Presbytery people were of another opinion. They believed that Austin was the best seminary in the U.S.A., and they said I probably needed to have my horizon widened. I agreed with them to go to a convocation in Austin in which the professors and others showed us the finer points of the seminary. I was impressed by the professors, the students, and the general overall picture that was presented to me, so I decided to enroll in Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in the fall of 1957.

The next problem was to sell our house. We put it up for a price about $ 1,000 above our vested interest, and it looked for a time that we would not sell it. But on the day we moved, we had two callers, both wanting it. Our furniture was mostly new at the time, but we were told by the seminary administrators that we would have to store it if we used seminary accommodations. Madge's parents in Osyka graciously agreed to let us store most of it with them, and we sold some of our older furniture or gave it away. The seminary had some new apartment buildings but they were going to people who had two children or fewer; we had three. The place they made available to us was one half of a large old house that sat partially over a

creek (the water actually came within a foot of the floor a couple of times during flash floods). The other side of the bottom part was rented to Charles and Ann Wolfe with their two children Christie and Hawley, and the small upstairs apartment was rented to Gene and Margaret March. The furniture in the apartments was substandard by almost any standard, and the whole place spoke of age and make-shift repairs. For example, our bed had several spokes missing, and some of the eyes on the gas stove would not operate. Making our situation more bearable was the fact that the cost was only $ 30.00 monthly and our lot was no worse than other student families. The little hamlet where we lived was downhill from the seminary and known to all as the "leper colony." Exchanging our previous accommodations for these was not easy.

We had several unforgettable experiences during our first year there. One was the time that Ann Wolfe captured a rat. We heard the gosh-awfullest racket one evening soon after we went to bed, and I ran to the front hall to see what was the matter. The door to the Wolfe's apartment was open, and Ann was behind the door holding a huge rat's tail which was protruding through the crack at the comer of the door. Charles was outside in the hall with a large knife taking slashes at the rat who in tum was expertly dodging Charles' efforts. The rat was shrieking, Ann was shrieking, Charles was stabbing and slashing, and Ann was holding on for dear life. I ran to get a broom, but the rat, now wounded, slipped out of Ann's grasp and got away, leaving a bloody mess behind him.

Up the hill from our community was Dean McCord's home, standing like a high and forbidding castle which we had to pass every morning on our way to chapel. One morning, I heard some rustling in the branches above, and looked up to see a huge stone falling out of the tree. Tied to the tree was a string that led to one of the upper story windows of McCord's home. One or two of their children had placed the stone there, and waited for an innocent student to come by, and had then used the string to shake it out. I was glad I wasn't hit.

Dr. David Stitt was our very bald president and even though I never really got to know him, I had a couple of experiences involving his boys. At the comer of the street where the seminary was located, a stone wall rose about twelve feet almost straight up from the street to the sidewalk. The residences of Dr. Jim Wharton's family and Dr. John Hendrick's family as well as the chapel fronted on this street. One day I came by that high embankment and found two of Dr. Stitt's boys, aged about seven or eight, climbing this small cliff. I helped them get down. Another time, they were out on a huge cliff overlooking the lake on the west side of Austin. Madge and I often went out to that place to get a view of the surrounding country. I heard their mother, Jane, calling the boys and I went out to investigate. They were out on the face of that cliff, completely unafraid. I am no hero, but I did go out a little way to help call them back. The Stitt boys, in my opinion, were about the bravest boys I ever saw.

Our day at the seminary began with chapel at 8:30 am with classes beginning at 9 am. Chapel attendance at that time was compulsory, but there was already a movement to make it optional. Each class was opened with a prayer by the professor. There was always a feeling of camaraderie among the students as well as friendly competition. The professors were all tough in their grading, and always expected the best from us.

Most of my time was consumed with hard study. I had never taken any course in college where I had to prepare papers, and almost all the courses except the languages required a paper to be written about once biweekly. This proved burdensome for me, and I never excelled at it. We had to take five hours of Hebrew and five hours of Greek, which did not even count toward our degree. Dr. Robert Gribble of the seminary taught us the Hebrew and his method was somewhat peculiar; he had us to begin at Gen. 1:1 and begin a march through the Bible, learning new words, punctuation, etc. as we went along. We never got much beyond the first chapter of Genesis. The Greek was taught to us at the University of Texas which was contiguous to the seminary. These hours, added to the fifteen to seventeen that were regular required studies, made up a heavier load than I had ever had in college, or even in graduate school. However, I managed to make good grades in almost every subject. At the end of three years, I finished fourth place in my class.

I always felt that the ones who had to pay for this hard study were Madge and the children. I would snap at the children for the least bit of noise or desire to get my attention. I was still having the bad headaches at that time, and this added to my cranky attitude. In fact, I believe that the pressure and the headaches fed on one another. It was during this time that Jean and Sally became so afraid of bugs, and I talked to a psychologist about it. He said this might be an indication that we were too strict on them. I knew who the culprit was, and I tried to modify my behavior, but not with a whole lot of success.

It was during my time at the seminary that I experienced the most severe physical pain I ever endured. I was walking up the hill to the seminary, and I was struck with agonizing pain in my right side, and it began to shift around so that both my side and back were hurting. I bent over almost to the ground. Some good samaritan came by in a car and saw me in this condition, and carried me to the University of Texas medical center where I had medical insurance. Even though I was given medication and an IV for the pain, I suffered until I was completely unconscious. The doctors said that I had kidney stones and their way to get at the problem was by giving me a massive dose of castor oil. I do not remember ever passing any stone. But the castor oil was certainly effective.

One of the subjects that really worried me during my second semester at the seminary was homiletics, or the art of preaching. I felt that I would never be much good at it, and thinking of doing it frightened me more than had the idea of teaching math. I really prepared hard for my first sermon before my peers, and when they criticized it (a normal procedure we used: all students would have their sermons gone over fairly thoroughly by their peers), about all that was said positively about me was that I had a good appearance.

My first sermon before regular parishioners came about in this way; Gene March and I were assigned as visitors for the West Lake Presbyterian Church near Austin during the second semester, and our job was to spend a few hours weekly doing visitation for the pastor Dave Evans. Dave was somewhat of a klutz: once during a morning service he had to do a baptism as well as communion, and he lost his place in the worship book. Instead of stopping and finding his place, he tried to continue on, with the result that he bungled it up pretty badly, and

on top of that, he forgot to serve the elders communion. But I really liked Dave: he tried his best to help Gene and me get into the business of being pastors. I didn't mind the visitation work, but Gene hated it. He would always ask me if I would knock at the door, and be the one to talk. Perhaps that is one reason Gene wound up being the Dean of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, instead of a pastor. Before we finished at the end of the semester, Dave asked us to each preach a sermon. I don't believe that anyone has ever worked so hard on preparing for a sermon as I did that one, but it must have taken true grit on the part of the parishioners to sit through it.

During the two summers between the regular school years, students were expected to go on field trip experiences. They were arranged by our Field Supervisor, Dr. Henry "The Duck" Quinius (a nickname based on the way he walked). In this way we got some experience preaching and pastoring, as well as earning a little extra money to help us through the seminary. During my first summer, I was assigned the small church at Jonesboro, La. as solo pastor. I remember that I always wore my black suit on Sundays, and some of the children called me the man in black. I also remember an interesting character who came around to see us: Dr. Lloyd O'Neal. Dr. O'Neal was the Presbytery Executive for Red River Presbytery, and he liked to visit all pastors and student pastors. When he came to see Madge and me, he told us some wild tale about an angry dog that was about to attack him, and he pointed his finger at the dog and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, sit down." The dog did as he was told. Then I saw him later in a camp at Choudrant where he had talked me into working for a couple of weeks as a counselor. We had a nice looking single guy named Dick Wells working there who was also in my class at the seminary and he seemed attracted to a single female counselor. Dr. O'Neal was of the opinion that these two, both being dedicated Christians, should be very suitable for one another in marriage. He put his best effort into promoting their romance, telling them he believed it was God's will, but nothing ever came of it.

I really enjoyed working with younger people, and I had always loved the outdoors, so the camping experience proved very uplifting for me. Once I lost my glasses in the part of the lake we used as a swimming area, and was able to find them by feeling around with my toes. During one of the weeks there, a camper had used his free time to fish and he caught a bass that must have weighed about four pounds. He was about to throw it back in because he did not want the bother of cleaning it, so I told him that I would like to have it. I went to the trouble of getting the scales off, and preparing it to be cooked, and I put it in the camp's freezer with the plan to take it home and enjoy a feast. But on the last day of camp, when the parents came, the boy asked me if I would show his parents the fish, and I consented. He indicated to them that he had not wanted to give it up, but I took it from him. They all looked at me as though I were some sort of grinch, so I immediately gave them the fish. You can't win them all.

The second year at the seminary was depressing to my whole class, for reasons I never did understand. Somehow our calling to the ministry had lost a lot of its glitter, and the competition did not seem so good-natured as before. Charles and Ann Wolfe had moved out of our apartment building upon his graduation and Cleve and Ann Wheelus, with their family, had taken their place. Cleve, a very serious kind of fellow, was one of my classmates and has had

a very successful career in the church in administrative work. However, it was through Cleve that I learned that good works are not always rewarded. One day it was raining very hard, and as Cleve could not go to get his son when he got out of school, I volunteered to go for him. Everything went well until a brand new car ran into me on the way back, and the driver turned out to be a black serviceman. He apologized profusely and I felt sorry for him because the officer gave him a ticket. He did not carry insurance but assured me he would pay whatever it cost to have the car repaired. I wrote to him several times stating the amount, but I never heard from him. I could have written his commanding officer and gotten him into trouble, but I decided that I did not want to do that. Nevertheless, my good deed did cost me plenty.

For the second summer, I was assigned to be the assistant of the Rev. Carl Phillips in Crowley, La. A temporary manse was rented for us right out in the middle of a poor French speaking community, and I Was struck by the difference between their culture and that of the anglos. Once a string of beads belonging to the lady next door broke, and the beads scattered over the floor. She was almost desperate in her fear that one of the beads might have been lost. The reason: they had been blessed by the bishop. As a part of my job, I served one country mission church as pastor, and I preached there most every Sunday. The people there were all French, and they didn't know more than two or three songs. One Sunday I announced a hymn I thought would be familiar, but when we started to sing, I was the only one singing. I stopped and asked them to select a hymn so we all could sing. Some person selected a number and I recognized immediately that I had never heard it, but I figured it was better that they know it than I. The pianist gave an introduction, and I started with them on the first note, planning to stop and let them sing it. But the first word was the only word that was sung: not a single member there could sing that song.

Carl Phillips was one of the nicest and best people I have met in the ministry. There seemed to be a division in his church between the conservatives who did not like any of the modern movements of the church, such as the church's stand on integration. and an equally influential group of moderates who wanted to work with the church. They believed that many of these stands were the right ones to take. Carl was caught between these two groups. I remember one sermon he gave: he said that perhaps both groups could turn just ninety degrees and they could be walking together instead of in opposite directions. One experience more than any other showed me the kind of person that Carl was. The summer I was there we both decided to work in a camp for a week,: Carl was the director and I was one of the counselors. One little boy in my group was trying to drive a nail in the tree, but try as he would, he did not seem to be able to get it started. I was just about to take the hammer to do it myself, when Carl made the remark: "Remember, we are building boys, not camps." I got the point: I let the boy work at it until he finished it. Carl moved later to a church in Gretna, La. and died soon after from cancer.

The third year at the seminary passed more quickly than the others. Gone were the days when a double dose of languages was piled on top of the regular required courses. Now came the anxious time of wondering where and if we would be called to serve upon graduation.

During the time at seminary, Madge had worked almost every school year as secretary either at the University Presbyterian or at the Wilshire Presbyterian Church. We had left the children with Ruth Lara Braud, a really fine person whose husband, Jorge, was one of the more brilliant students at the seminary. Sadly, as Jorge later advanced in his status in the church, apparently he felt he had outgrown Ruth, and he divorced her. Many Mexican Americans resented the fact that on leaving her, he married an anglo girl with blonde hair. Madge did not feel bad about leaving the children with Ruth since she was extraordinarily kind and had a couple of children of her own. If it had not been for the extra money Madge earned, we could not have made it through the seminary. As it was, at the end of my three years training, one hundred dollars plus an old car and our furniture made up our total possessions. Somehow, God had seen to it that we made it through, but had not made any provisions for anything extra.

We had a hilarious experience during our last year in Austin. Harold Willard, an older classmate from Arkansas, was always full of jokes and seemed to like to have fun more than he liked to prepare for the ministry. When Halloween came around, even more serious people such as Madge and I would get in the swing of merry making, so it was not too big a surprise to Madge that when she visited Harold and his wife on Halloween, she found Harold dressed like a woman. When Harold answered the door and Madge saw him, she said, "For Pete's sakes, Harold." About that time, Judy appeared and she said, "Madge, I want to introduce you to Harold's mother, Mrs. Willard." Harold and his mother were the exact image of one another. Madge is usually unflappable, but this was one time that she was completely at a loss for words. A sad note on Harold: the last time I saw him was at a Synod meeting in Oklahoma, and he looked worried and peaked. I tried to joke with him, but he didn't even smile. I told him that he was quite unlike his old self; he used to be so full of fun. He answered, "There comes a time when the fun is all gone, Dick." I later heard that he had changed denominations to the Disciples of Christ, and then I have heard no further.

During the last two semesters at Austin, I would preach at a crossroads country church in northeastern Texas twice a month. I would go up on Saturday, spend the night with some older couple, then preach on Sunday and have dinner with some member before returning. These were all farm families, and nearly all of their houses were huge two storied buildings which probably could accommodate ten or twelve children. All that was left of them were the old man and old woman, and usually I would find them sitting by the fireside. Their farms were all on the soil bank plan: the government was paying them not to farm, and so there was little or no activity on their farms. It would seem strange sleeping in one of the big rooms on a large feather bed; they showed so many signs of a life that used to be but which would never be again. The meals on Sunday were also an aberration from my usual fare. Nearly always there would be three or four kinds of meat, several kinds of vegetables, rice and potatoes, and several deserts. I suppose the women of the houses never learned how to cook less after their children all left.

Once on my return on a Sunday afternoon, I saw a young hitch-hiker with a small duffle bag trying to hitch a ride in my direction, and I stopped to pick him up. He was a rather sallow looking fellow, and he told me that he had just got out of jail. He told me he had a friend in a jail in Oklahoma who would really pay a large sum of money to anyone who would help him

break out of jail, and he wanted me to take him there. He said he could slip his friend some hack-saw blades, and this would be easy money for us. I told him that it just wouldn't look right for a minister to help a person get out of jail. He seemed to understand. However, until we arrived in Austin, I was afraid that he might pull a gun or a knife from his bag to force me to change my mind. I decided not to pick up any more hitch-hikers after that.

I still had not developed many preaching skills during my senior year, and found it difficult to face a congregation. But one lady helped me more than any other person: when I would preach at the cross-road church on Sunday morning, she would look up with intense interest as though what I was saying was the most important thing in the world to her. I learned to focus my attention on her, and by doing this I slowly began to improve. These preaching missions would require me to be gone from Saturday morning until Sunday night, so I was unable to take Madge with me; she had to care for the children. But during this time in my life, I really did not want Madge to be present when I preached: I feared that my inability to do a good job would embarrass her. Later, when I gained some confidence, I came to look on her as my strongest supporter when I went into the pulpit.

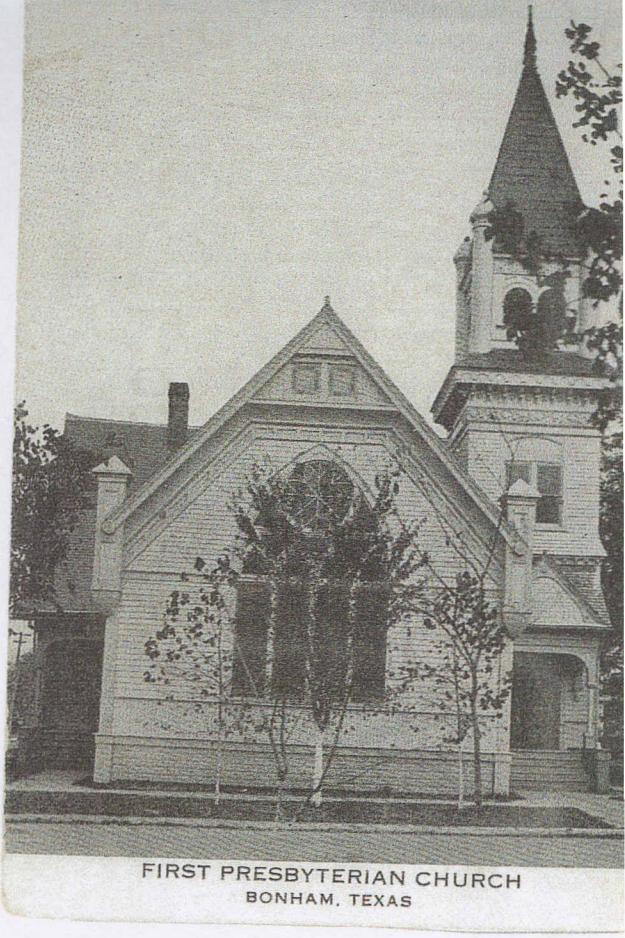
When I got ready to look for a permanent church in the spring, I was told that we should never consider more than one church at a time. We were not to get several churches on a string and then try to compare them. Jack Bennett, who had been a senior when I came to the seminary for my first year, seems to have felt a heavy responsibility both for me and for a small church near Shreveport which he had served as a student when at the seminary. He tried to put pressure on me to take that church, something like Farrel did John Calvin at Geneva. I did go over to look it over, but I did not feel any particular desire to go there. This was the only church I considered other than the First Presbyterian Church of Bonham.

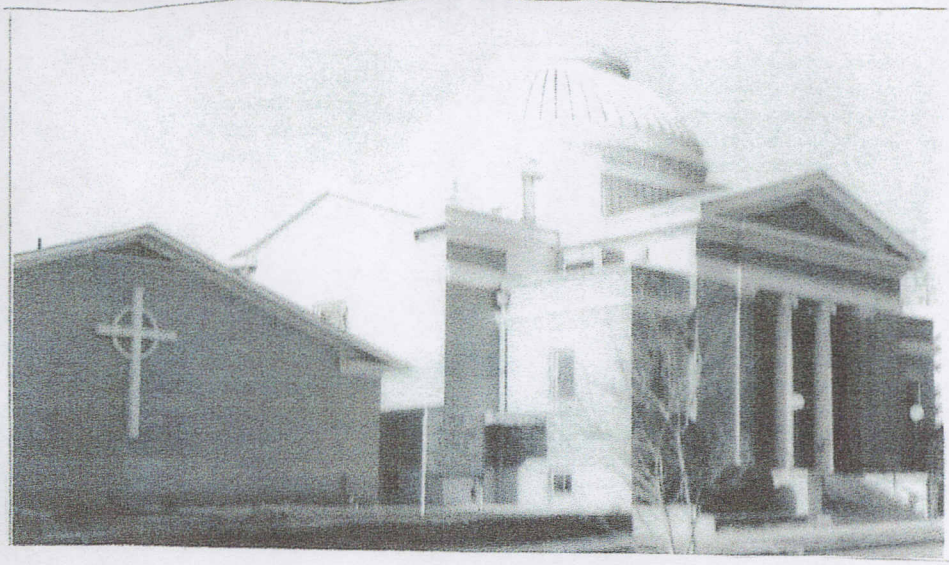
I was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Bonham in this way: The Reverend Ed Bayless was at that time the Chairman of the Committee on the Minister and His Work in Northeast Texas Presbytery, and he came early in the spring to look over the graduating class to procure ministers for the vacant churches in his presbytery. I went to talk with him, and he listed several churches. Among them he named Bonham. I had never heard of the town, and the way he pronounced it, it sounded like "Bonn." He described the church and told me it was north of Dallas about seventy five miles. He told me that Dr. Ed Grant, a lay person that had a top job in Christian Education in our denomination, as well as Dr. Charles Kraemer, president of the Assembly Training School, were both products of that church. From his description of the church and the town, I decided that I might like to be considered for their pastor, and I made arrangements to meet them and to preach for them on one Sunday morning.

At first sight, I was not overly impressed with the city of Bonham, or the general area. The trees were all very small, and the topography of the land had nothing in particular to commend it. The town was typical of towns its size of about ten thousand; it had a city square, a newspaper, a fairly large high school, and several fairly good stores downtown. The Presbyterian Church was located on the main street near downtown, and it was a beautiful old wooden structure with large windows, and a tall bell tower. Later, when I had been there for

awhile, I became more accustomed to the appearance of the place and liked it a good deal better, but at first I was not excited about going there. On the other hand, I did not find it too objectionable.

On my first visit, I stayed overnight on Saturday in a motel, and the next morning, I ate at a drug store in Bonham that served breakfast. There I noticed a man staring at me in a rather peculiar way: he looked very countrified and unusual in his appearance. Later it turned out that he was an elder in the church and a member of the pulpit nominating committee. He probably figured that I would be eating at that drugstore since it was the only place in town that served breakfast. If so, most likely he came down to see what I looked like. This was my first introduction to the town that would be our home for more than three years.





Above: Our ftrst church to serve as pastor,]960-]964.

Top left: 1served as the interim pastor at Milton, WV ('87-'90)

We loved our church in Van Buren, AR (' 76-'81) shown on the left.

Pictured below is Franklin Presbyterian Church, WV which we dearly loved, and served in three different interims, during the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

CHAPTER XI

MY FIRST PASTORATE

The pulpit nominating committee told me that they were planning to renovate the manse, but I was really surprised at its beauty when Madge and I came up to see it together. The house, a large two storied red brick mansion, was next door to the church. Probably the church could never have afforded it, but it was left by a will to the church by a rich banker on the condition that it would always be used for the minister's home. Downstairs, the front door gave entrance to a spacious foyer with stairs leading to the second floor. On the left was a large formal dining room, which led into a smaller dinette, and then the large kitchen with a walk-in pantry and a utility room Behind the kitchen, and leading to the back door, was a small room for the washing machine and dryer. On the right side oithe foyer, the door gave entrance to a large living room area with a fireplace. The living room had two large glass doors at the rear which opened into a "sun-porch," a large well-lighted room with tiled floors that we used for a family room. Behind the stairwell was a door leading to a back downstairs bedroom, and half -bath. Underneath the stairwell was a door leading to a large basement.

Upstairs, the study was at the head of the stairs and situated over the back downstairs bedroom. It had windows on three sides, and book shelves across the remaining side. To the left of the stairs, a door led into a rather large master bedroom which had a large bath adjoining. The bathroom fixtures were all of marble, and very fine in their age, which probably dated to the 1890s. To the right of the stairs, there was a railing around the stairwell, and a open corridor which led into two bed-rooms on the right side of the house, and on around to the back to a bedroom on the left side. Large walk-in closets were in every room, and in addition the front bedroom on right side had a "vanity-room." A bathroom separated the two bedrooms on the right side of the house. All the floors in the house were of wood, except the sunporch, but a new carpet had been put on the living room floor.

We gave Jean and Sally the room on the right of the stairs with the vanity; it overlooked the street on the right side in front. Richard had the back room all to himself. Madge and I took the master bedroom on the left. The bedroom around the stairwell which was actually on the left front side of the house, remained unused. It was the only room that had been left furnished, and all the furniture was of tremendous size. Neither did we use the down-stairs bedroom until later. All the rooms were newly papered, and the place really looked like a castle to me. Our furniture, most of which was reclaimed from storage at the Mixon home, was adequate for it, except that we left the downstairs bedroom unfurnished.

Some of our happiest days were spent in Bonham. The house proved to be very enjoyable to live in, and it also provided room for large church gatherings. Not only did we enjoy the house, we liked the townspeople. I was soon widely known through the town, and began to take part in many town activities. Most all of the members of the church seemed to genuinely like us, and we had an entre to all the free publicity we needed through the McAlisters who owned the local paper. The work was challenging, but not near so hard as seminary had

been, so I began to fit into the rhythm of the work rather quickly. In addition to my regular preaching services in Bonham, I was soon preaching on a fairly regular basis in an old, nearly dead Cumberland Presbyterian church in a nearby town, and a livlier Cumberland church in the country.

By this time, both Richie and Jean were in school. In the fourth grade, Richie had a marvelous teacher named Mrs. Alverson. She tried to get the students involved in all that she did, and she saw teaching as a way to introduce children not only to knowledge, but to all of life. However, she might have gone too far, I think, when she had them participate with her in the killing of a chicken and cutting it up to cook. It was about this time also that I took Richie out to try out to play with the Little League baseball team. Richie did his best to throw and to hit, but being untrained, he did not do well. The coach told him that he could not play, and this pretty much turned me against the Little League. I had thought they were there to help boys, but it turned out that they wanted real winners. It was during this time also that Richie wanted to get a dog, and we found a beautiful little pup, a mix between a German Shepherd and a Collie, that one of the church members owned, and they were willing to give him to us. It was winter time, and we let him live in the basement at night, and in the back yard by day. The only rule was that Richie had to clean up after him. Richie really detested that job. Besides, little "Tex" began to snap at our heels, and in this way made a nuisance of himself. In other respects, he was a lively little fellow, and very loveable. But his snapping finally convinced Madge and me that we had better let him go. I think Richie was relieved.

I remember one other incident with Richie. One day I was using the paper cutter to cut paper to a certain size, and I let Richie feed the cutter as I brought the cutting edge down. All at once Richie slck his finger all the way under the cutting blade, and I could not stop the cutter. I cut about half way through his finger. This really scared me. I quickly called Dr. Thel Williams' office to alert them, and I grabbed Richie up and took him there as fast as I could. The cut had not damaged the bone, and it soon healed. But it was a hard experience for me.

I cannot remember much about Jean's school days at that time but I do remember that she was taking piano lessons under Mrs. Virginia Beard who lived across the street a couple of houses down from our church. Virginia was an older maiden lady, and she loved cats: there must have been twenty or thirty in her large house. An odor of cat urine was the first thing to greet you on entering her house. But she was a nice lady, a good teacher, and a very good friend of ours. She was of real help to Madge when Madge gave a big party on Stephen Foster's birthday, and people sat around in the den and the living room singing his hymns.

One other experience involving Jean comes to mind. It was exceedingly cold one day, and snow was on the ground. The water hose to the washing machine had broken and the floor was flooded with water. I was gone visiting a parishioner at the time. Madge was almost exasperated with the situation when in walked Jean, holding by the tail a dead rat that was covered with frost. She said, "Mama, I found a little friend." Only those who know how deathly afraid of rats that Madge is, can appreciate this story.

Sally did not attend school until we left Bonham (Sally corrected me on this: she said she did have a year's school in Bonham), but I believe she did take some piano lessons under Virginia. (Again, Sally says, "Nope, not me." Whose biography do you think this is, Sally?) For a long time Sally was the baby of the family and was accorded all the benefits and privileges of that position. One of these benefits was to go with Madge and me on our various little excursions to Sherman or other nearby cities, which we usually did during the school day. Sally was always ready to tell Jean and Richie what we had done, and if we had eaten out, she would describe what we ate. I believe she enjoyed a little jealousy on their part.

The First Presbyterian Church of Bonham was running like a well-oiled machine when I arrived, and it was still running that way when I left. All the committees were filled with reliable people who were at meetings on time and made good contributions to the work. Seldom were there any absentees from Session or Diaconate meetings, and we always had representatives at Presbytery meetings. The Christian Education Committee was particularly strong, and the church school there would probably serve as a model for any church.

I give credit for the smooth operations of the Bonham church chiefly to two people; Nickie Williams and her husband, Dr. Thel. Nickie was of Assyrian descent, and had been at the Assembly Training School when Madge was there. She was very smart, interested in the church, and aggressive. Nothing escaped her attention. Her ideas were sound and practical. Toward the end of my time in Bonham, I ran into more and more conflict with Nickie because we were both somewhat hard-headed, but I will have to give her credit: she was one of the main reasons that church was strong. Her husband Thel seemed to be a "yes-man" but in his own way he made a good contribution. His father had been a minister at the Bonham church, and Thel was really devoted to the church. He absolutely minded Nickie, but he could always be counted on to support the church.

I had a disproportionate number of funerals in Bonham, especially during the first six months there. Most of the funerals were for people who were not members of our church, but who had some connection with presbyterianism. My funerals averaged about two per month, and at first I was almost unaffected by them. It was just part of the job. But after having so many, they began to wear on my nerves, and I remember that during the tenth funeral (or thereabouts), we were in a country church and they were singing some song about beyond the sunset, and everybody in the church was crying. All at once, tears came to my eyes as well, even though I did not even know the lady. I was glad when the frequency of funerals was reduced.

During that time, it was customary for the pastors to head up the funeral procession, and that usually worked out all right. But once I was at the head of a long procession, and we came to a large cemetary where it was difficult to see the tent covering that usually marked the site of a grave. I began to go up one row of graves and down another searching for the new grave, with the long procession following me like a snake. Finally, I saw that I was not even getting close, so I stopped the procession and walked back to the funeral coach to ask directions. This experience was only topped by another I had in Van Buren, Arkansas which I will tell later.

However, I had interesting experiences in Bonham. One was the case of Mr. Conrad and his wife. They were an older couple from Colorado, and they moved in and joined the church soon after I came. A few months later, Mrs. Conrad began to be ill and skip church, but when I went around to see her, Mr. Conrad would always give an excuse for not letting me in. One day I came when he was not there, and Mrs. Conrad looked very ill. She told me that she had met her husband late in life, and that he had several wives before her. She also told me that she suspected that he was trying to poison her. I then saw Mr. Conrad and insisted that he take her to see a doctor. He did not like it, but finally he took her to see some osteopaths who were practicing in town. They immediately admitted her to the hospital but she died soon after. Mter her death, I went around to see Mr. Conrad, but he called me a bad name and ordered me out of his house. He said I had killed her. I told Mrs. McAlliister about the situation since she had also befriended Mrs. Conrad, and both of us thought probably Mr. Conrad had poisoned her, but we did not have enough proof to do anything about it.

I also had some interesting experiences connected with the Grant family. John Grant (the brother of Ed, mentioned earlier), was a patient in one of the nearby convalescent homes, and I visited him often. He had to get around in a wheel-chair since he had only one leg, but he would go up and down the hall visiting other people, and trying to cheer them up. He took me to see one lady in her forties who was so completely crippled with arthritis that she could not even move her arm or hands. She had told John that often she was in agony because she could not reach up to scratch her nose, and sometimes it itched fiercely. She could move her hand a small way, so he rigged up a stick which would reach up to her nose from her hand. The end near her nose had a rag tied to it so it would not damage her skin. By moving her hand up and down a slight bit, she could scratch her nose. She was so appreciative of what he did that it was almost unbelievable. Another brother of the Grants, Bob, had a wife named Velma who ran a clothing store. One day when Madge was not in the house, I was taking a bath upstairs, and I heard Velma calling, "Reverend Young." We did not lock the doors then, and I knew she was inside the house, so I thought that if I stayed quiet, she would go away. I then heard her coming up the stairs, still calling. Finally, when she got to the door of our bedroom, which stood between the bathroom and the head of the stairs, I knew I had better do something or soon she would be right there in the bathroom. So I yelled as loud as I could, "Velma, I'm in the bathroom." This turned her back. Her husband Bob suffered a series of small strokes, and he died while I was there. He had a beautiful sport coat that Velma wanted to give me, and I was glad to get it. The only thing wrong was that the sleeves were about an inch too short, but I had them altered. A few years later, when I attended a Presbytery meeting in Baton Rouge, Ed Grant was there and sat by me. I had the coat on at the time, and I told him it had belonged to Bob. He said, "Dick, do you mind if I feel it?" This seemed to be very meaningful to him.

Ed Grant was elected moderator of our General Assembly while I was serving the church in Bonham, and he came to visit Bonham during that year. I asked him to preach for me on Sunday, and he was glad to do it. We were sitting behind the pulpit while the choir was singing a special, and Ed spotted an old friend but could not remember his name. He punched me and asked, "Dick, who is the man at the end of the third row" and I told him the man's name. During his sermon, he made several references to the man by name, but always looked to a

different person than the one with that name. Communication behind the pulpit while the choir is singing does not always work out welL

I did not do so well with one of the relatives of the Grants. Mrs. Carmichael had married the Grant brothers' first cousin, and while her husband was gentle enough, Mrs. Carmichael was a rather overbearing type of person, and she took it on herself to direct the gardener who kept up the manse yard. In fact the yard was very beautiful; it was well landscaped, and Herman, the black man who tended it, kept it well groomed. Herman could have easily done the work without direction, but Mrs. Carmichael liked to be there. I put up with this for over a year, but finally, I lost my cool after she took over the back yard where I worked. I had grown a long bed of zenias, and when they came to full bloom, I noticed that a whole lot of them had been picked and placed in church on Sunday morning. One of the ladies told me that Mrs. Carmichael had done it. The next time she came over, I said, "Mrs. Carmichael, you have a nice big yard at your home to keep, and this is the only yard I've got." She said, "Well, if that's the way you feel about it, I won't do this job anymore." Simply writing down what she said does not give it the same force that it had when she spoke it. She never did like me much after that, but I did get to have my own yard.

We had a very good friend who lived within a block of us, an older lady named Louise Holland. She had many antique pieces, and much antique furniture. All at once she began destroying old letters and pictures, and she talked to me on my visits with her about death. She wanted to give us an old cedar chest which she had brought with her from Louisville when she and her husband had lived there, and I was glad to have it. She also said she was putting a bookcase up for sale for $15.00 and I told her I would like to buy it. We have both of those articles of furniture to this day Then she suddenly became ill and went into a coma from which it looked for a time she would not recover. But one day I was down to the hospital just to check on her, and found her awake and lucid. When I returned home that afternoon, Mrs. Carmichael was out in our yard working, as I had not yet had my confrontation with her, and I told her Mrs. Holland was awake. She said that Louise had promised her a lot of her antiques, and she was going immediately to see her and ask her for certain pieces while she was still alive. I believe that Louise left most of her belongings to Nickie Williams, which was right, because Nickie and Thel had cared for her over the years.

Most of the experiences I had in Bonham were very pleasant; visiting with members, enjoying the spacious manse, going riding with Madge, holding informal services in the country church, etc. Most of the people were super people and treated us with a great deal of kindness. There was for example Mr. Cole, who always said that I got out pretty deep with my sermon, but fortunately I came across the deep water and made it to shore. He said once that he believed there were only two people living that he thought were really good people, himself and me. But he said he sometimes suspected even me. Then there was Aubrey McAlister, the owner of the local newspaper, who liked to take me fishing with him. Once he took me to lake Texoma, and we were to fish off a barge. It was raining and cold that day, and we went inside the barge which was heated, and we were able to sit in rocking chairs and fish inside the barge. For those who were tired of fishing, there was TV. Any who did not catch enough fish could buy all the

live fish they wanted, and tell their spouses they caught them. But I also had some peculiar experiences. There was, for example, the deacon Philip Due, who wanted to go visiting with me to introduce me to folks. I said OK, but soon found out that he was a talker. By this, I mean he grabbed the conversation at the very beginning and did not close his mouth until I said it was time to go. Philip once brought another deacon over to see me to defend the boy scout troop. Somehow they thought I was against scouting. As a matter of fact, I was very much for scouting, and one year I spent several hours weekly helping four boys prepare for a God and Country Award. Then there was Nolan Ashmore who was working for a degree in math, and was taking a subject which was proving too hard for him. The subject was right down my line, and I was able to give him substantial help. When Madge and I visited Bonham a few years ago to celebrate the anniversary of the church, Nolan gave me a great deal of credit for his degree, which he said led to his being chosen principal of the local high school.

While we were in Bonham, we heard a good deal about Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who was from that area, but we never met him. Then a library was built in his honor in Bonham, and it became a tourist attraction. One day Eulalie Beard, Madge's sister, was visiting us, and I suggested we go over to see the library. As we were browsing through, I noticed that one room was designated as Sam Rayburn's Study, and I suggested we go in and look at it. There was a huge picture of Mr. Rayborn behind the desk, and I directed Eulalie's attention to it. It was not until then that I noticed a short, fat man sitting behind the desk, who was in fact Mr. Rayburn. I was really embarrassed. Later Mr. Rayburn was hospitalized in Bonham within a block of our church, and when he died, the funeral was held only a couple of blocks down the road at the First Baptist Church. Four men who were either president or would be president attended the funeral and all passed by our church in the procession. They were John Kennedy, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon. Little Richie went out to meet Johnson when he landed in a helicopter, but there were so many other famous people there that Johnson was hardly noticed.

Toward the end of my ministry in Bonham, I had the funeral of a former pastor's wife. The woman had had a long bout with cancer, and had been an invalid over two or three years, so when the pastor acted almost happy at her funeral, I imagined that he was glad that she was now out of her suffering and was at home with the Lord. About three months later, I heard that he had remarried, so I began to wonder if I had accurately determined the cause for his happiness. But while he was there he told me that he was about to resign his church in the home town of the Aggies, and if I wished, he would recommend me for the pulpit. At that time, I did not wish to go and said no.

But several things did begin to happen which caused me to think more and more about leaving. For one thing, I was not getting along with Nickie Williams all that well, and this was a constant source of small irritation. But then an event happened that was really beyond my abilility to cope. It began when the son of Willis Duff, then a nineteen year old student at the University of Texas, committed suicide. I went down with the Duffs to Austin to help make arrangements, and learned that the boy had been in a cult, and that he had made specific plans for his funeral. He wanted his friends in the cult, as well as others in Bonham, to have a party

on the night of his wake, and he wanted his uncle Ed Bayless to preach his funeral sermons from passages he had marked in Ecclesiastes. The party was held in the home of one of our elders. He vacated his home that night and turned the place over to his daughter who was a friend of the deceased. From what I was told, there was drinking and dancing all night. The garbage collector told me that more than a trash can of whiskey bottles were found the next day. Even the deceased's younger teen-age sister was up all night at the party.

Soon after this, a committee meeting was being held one night at the church, with one of the deacons, Luke Newman, and his wife in attendance. They got a call from their older daughter telling them that she had come home to fmd their thirteen year old daughter hanging by the neck from a door, and when she opened the door, the girl had fallen to the floor. She said that she was blue in the face. Dr. Thel was also at the meeting, so he, Luke and his wife, and I immediately left to go to their home. Dr. Thel gave her some shots, and said that he could detect some breathing. Mrs. Newman got down on her knees and began to bark like a dog. Later, she railed into me, and asked me why God had let this happen. Mter all, she said, they were doing church business when it happened. I finally answered that the daughter was alive, but perhaps the ending would have been different if they had not been there at the meeting. Later, another deacon's wife, Eloise Meade, decided that the girl had not been treated well at home, and so she began to invite her to her home and show her much kindness. The girl then found a time when Eloise was not at home, and she cut up her fine furniture with a knife. *Mter* this happened, the mother and Eloise brought the girl to me to ask me what they should do. I recommended a pyschiatrist. He determined that the girl felt unloved, and she was simply testing Eloise to see if she really loved her as much as she professed. But this incident, along with the suicide, was begining to tell on my nerves. It seemed to me that a sinister evil had been let loose on our town.

Two other things were occurring near the end of my ministry in Bonham. One was the lonesome rides that Madge and I used to take. We had many friends there in Bonham, but none of them except for Virginia Beard and Louise Holland, were very close. Madge and I would ride out over the countryside, but the scenery just was not up to the beauty of the Mississippi hills. We often talked of the lonesome bois d'arc bottoms, so called for the Osage Orange that grew there and were called by the name "bois d'arc" because of their being so crooked and warped.

Also, Madge had become pregnant, and the summer of 1963 was extremely hot, at times over 110 degrees. All of us moved downstairs to the one bedroom there, and we put a window air-conditioner in it to keep us cool, but still we all had an uncomfortable summer. When Greg was born on August 10, it seemed to us that we were almost alone: we had no family there, and few close friends. Madge really wanted to be nearer her folks. So when we received a call to work in the Magnolia Presbyterian Church in Misissippi, about ten miles from Osyka, we decided this was the thing to do.

Greg was actually born in Sherman. Madge and I had visited the obstetrician there every other week over a period of months, and it was during these visits that Sally got to eat out with us and kind of goaded Richie and Jean about it. On the night Greg was born, we gathered the

children together and took them with us to Sherman, and they stayed outside in the waiting room with me until Greg was delivered. I think all of us still remember how he looked with his one tooth and his blue and white checkered diaper shirt. Nickie Williams was really hurt that we had not asked her to keep the children during that time, but it all happened so quickly that we didn't really consider anything other than what we did.

A tragic national event happened near us in the fall of 1963 before we left. Dallas was only 75 miles south of us, and one day when I came in from my work, I learned that President Kennedy had been shot. I had never been a Kennedy fan, but it seemed hard to believe that anyone would shoot our President. We had hopes of his survival, and prayed that he would live, but it was not to be. His funeral on TV was a very elaborate affair: I imagined it to be something like the funeral of one of the old kings of Europe. It might have been beneficial for the nation to mourn in that way; I do not know. I do know that our local ministerial alliance put on a memorial service for him, and we invited both black and white.The stadium was packed. At least Kennedy's death helped to bring us together across racial lines.

I really felt that I had related well as a pastor to the people of Bonham, but I did have one incident at the end that caused me to leave on a somewhat sour note. The church had never paid me more than minimal wages, and at that time, the minimum was very low. Our family could not go to the movies or have anything extra. I was supposed to get four weeks vacation in the fall, but I did not take a vacation that year. .It was my plan to ask the deacons if I could take my vacation time at the end of my pastorate. They did not allow it: they said that the reason for a vacation was to be refreshed for the work of the ministry ahead. I got neither a vacation nor the pay. Aubrey McAlister was a deacon then, and he did give me some support on this. He told me later that it would be better for a minister to never approach the diaconate with a request of that nature but rather ask one of his friends to do it. Perhaps he was right.

CHAPTER XI

INTO HOT WATER AND OUT AGAIN

The church in Magnolia was much smaller than the one in Bonham, but it seemed to be a going affair. Dr. Wardlaw, the pastor who had been on the field many years, really talked hard to convince me to come, and the people seemed to really want us. But of course the chief drawing card was the nearness to Madge's folks.

It was just beginning 1964, and the civil rights agenda was more and more in the national forefront, but I did not see that as a real problem. As a matter of fact, I believed that I would be in a position to really help the Magnolia Church make a transition from the old to the new ways. After all, I was a southerner myself, and I understood the ways and the background of the south.

We had hardly got to the new church before we saw that our decision might have been made in too much haste. The search committee had promised us that the manse would be refurbished and ready before we got in, but when our furniture came, the whole place was a real mess. The tile had been tom off the kitchen floor; none of the drapes for the large windows were up nor had they even been ordered. We had no place to wash and dry clothes, and hardly a place to cook and eat. This problem was solved in about three weeks, but it did not make us feel good to get started off in this way.

Madge and I really did enjoy some aspects of our stay in Magnolia. Her family was close, and we got to see them as often as we wished. Also, her mother had some sisters living in the area, and Madge had some cousins right in town. I did a good deal of work visiting the members, and got to know some of them fairly well. Our children were in school, and our life could be called fairly normal and peaceful.

Some of my chief memories about our stay in Magnolia were the tremendous number of hard rain storms we had, and also the large pecan trees which grew around the manse. It seemed like a virtual river would flow right under the manse when one of those heavy rains came. Also there were many flowers around the manse yard, and I helped them get a further lease on life by purchasing a huge load of barnyard fertilizer.

Again, the church building was right next door to the church, and I had a fine little study In It. We had room for about one hundred people in the pews, and they were usually nearly full, but never crowded. None of Madge's Magnolia relatives came to this church, since they were mainly Baptists.

The school for the children was about three blocks down the road so they walked to school. A lot of little boys teased Sally and Jean, and they threatened to have Richie beat them up. One time all these little ruffians jumped Richie, but he was able to ward them off because each of them was smaller than he, but the whole crowd of them together did give him a hard

time. Once a boy Richie's age gave him a shove and told him that he could not shove back because he was a preacher's son. Once Sally came home and told us about a child named Charlotte Chisolm. Charlotte was older but in Sally's class because she was retarded, and none of the girls wanted to play with her. She said that Charlotte stank, and when she would come sit with their group to eat at lunchtime, all of them would hold their nose and move to another table. I asked Sally if she did that too, and she said yes. I told her she should be kind to Charlotte. But I suppose it is hard for a second grader to understand such things. Jean continued her music; she was the youngest to participate in the spring recital in Fernwood, and we were quite proud of her.

As the spring of 1964 wore on, the civil rights movement began to become more and more a national issue, but as far as Magnolia was concerned, many people still regarded blacks the same as when they were slaves. In the Rotary Club, I soon found out that most of the town people were far less sympathetic to the black cause than I was. Once they had the sherriff of our county as a speaker, and he talked about how the sheriff s department helped the scouts. He asked for questions, and I asked how many black children were members of the scouts. He did not like my question. I was told on good authority that whenever any black person gave the peace officers any trouble, they were taken out into the woods and beaten.

In our congregation was a fine family whose son was a captain in the national guard. Once when the son was home, he and I were discussing the black situation, and I asked him what he would do if were commanded to help integrate the schools (As I recall, the Meredith case was before the courts at the time). To my surprise, he said that he would refuse to turn against his own people in Mississippi.

We had a member in our church who was an alcoholic, and I often visited him down at his little store. I even visited him some in jails when he had to go in for driving while intoxicated. One day there came into his store a large good looking person who was as white as I am, and who I supposed to be a white man. The store owner asked if I wanted a coke, and I said OK, but when he looked, there were none in his machine. He turned to the large man and said, "Boy, go over to the store nextdoor and get the reverend a coke." The man bowed his head, said "Yassuh," and left. I was really embarrassed about this. The storeowner said, "He might look white, but he's just a nigger."

In talking to one of our elders about the black people, he said, "I love the black people as much as any northener. I also love my dog, but I wouldn't let my dog come into my living room." This man was really a fine man, and good hearted. But on the subject of race, he was blind.

Once I visited the home of the chairman of the Board of Deacons, who happened to be the Superintendent of the School Board for the district. We had a nice visit, but as I was about to leave, someone had to get something out of the closet in the hall, and I noticed there a large number of white robes. I was not sure, but they looked suspiciously like KKK robes. Later he was one of those who took the harshest stand against the permission for blacks to attend the

Magnolia Church.

I had one experience of a peculiar nature during this time. I had known a black pastor in Bonham, and though he and I were never close, still I had visited in his home and had prayed for his wife who was dying of cancer. She died soon after I left, and unknown to myself, the pastor had remarried after only a few months. I had not even heard from him during the interval, but during the summer as the race issue began to heat up, I got a call from him, and he said he was coming through Magnolia with his new wife and he wanted to bring her by and introduce her to me. I said fine, and told him where our church was. When they came by, I said that I would like for them to walk with me over to the manse to introduce her to Madge. As we were walking the half block down the sidewalk, he put his arm up on my shoulder as though we were closest friends. Cars would slow down and people stared. It was a little later that a cross was burned there on that street.

Early that summer, I served as a counselor at a Presbytery camp for children held at Percy Quinn State Park. At the camp there was a young couple, both of whom were very tall, and there was an old black cemetary near the camp with a large hole dug out in the middle of it. I decided to take the campers over to cemetery one night, and I told them that the hole was where a very tall black man had been buried, but since his grave was not covered like the rest, he often could be seen wandering through the grave yard at night. I told them he was looking for somebody to cover his grave. Before we went over, I asked the wife in the young couple to sit on her husband's shoulders and to hold out a couple of brooms on either side with sheets draped over them. At my signal, they were to emerge from the woods near the place we were to meet. Just as I finished my story to the youngster, I let the light play over the old dug out place, and then turned it towards the woods. Sure enough, there emerged the ghostly figure, and a very tall one at that. I felt that this kind of thing added a little spice to the camp life.

For our last day at camp, we were to have as our early morning chapel speaker an old retired missionary who resided about fifty miles distance. During that night before he was to speak, the KKK burned a black church which was contiguous to our camp area, and we smelled the smoke and saw the lighted sky, but we did not go over. The next morning the old missionary passed the scene on his way to the camp, and by then there were state police officers and members of the FBI there. The old missionary had fire in his eyes. He wanted us to go to that sight and have our communion there, but those of of on the camping staff decided against it: we felt it would be wrong to put our youth at risk. When the old missionary rose to speak, he said that he had prepared one message, but now he had another one. He spoke of Daniel and the Lion's Den, and said that there comes a time in the Christian life where we have to say plainly were we stand. His sermon helped me for the months that lay ahead.

My trouble with the Magnolia Church had really begun as early as Easter, but I had not realized that it would tum out as it did. It was at that time that there were talks of the Freedom Riders who were supposed to be coming to our area, and who were supposedly under the leadership of William Sloane Coffm, the chaplain at Yale. I wrote the Reverend Coffm and told him that there was a group of moderate people in the area including the Episcopal minister and

myself who were sincerely trying to help in race relations, and I felt that the "invasion" by these outsiders would really hurt our work. I pointed out to him that it was the people who were staying on the field rather than the "heroes" who would come one day and leave the next who would really solve the problems. He wrote a one liner in response to my long letter. He said, "We have considered your viewpoints, and we have rejected them." Although I resented his cavalier attitude, I later came to the conclusion that moderates like myself would never have been able to make much of a dent in the problem.

During Holy Week, the chairman of the Board of Deacons told me that he had heard that the Freedom Riders would be in our town on Easter, and would be coming to the area churches to worship. They would have with them some black people who were determined to integrate the churches. He said that he would have some dogs ready to greet them at the door. I immediately called a joiht meeting of the Session and the Diaconate to deal with the matter, and we met for about four hours. I began the meeting with prayer as usual, and laid out the problem in the best way I knew how. I reminded them that this was the house of God and that all people should be welcome. We engaged in a debate that lasted over three hours, and every member of the session and diaconate had an opinion to offer. One elder said that if we simply let them come and did not make a fuss about it, that would end the problem: all they wanted to do was to get a reaction from us. The superintendent of schools wanted to get some trained dogs at the doors. I got my chief support from a young lawyer named Thaddeus Leggett III who had attended Milsaps College: he wanted to allow them complete freedom to come, and to welcome them. During the debate, I tried to convince one elder by mentioning that his son was a Presbyterian minister, and I had talked to him about the problem. His son was for the open admittance of blacks. This made the elder very angry, and he told me to keep his family out of this. The upshot of all the debate was a compromise: we decided not to allow the demonstrators entrance on Easter, but thereafter, any blacks that wished to worship with us would be welcomed.

We made calls around to the congregation to announce the policy that had been decided. The demonstrators were in McComb on Easter, but none came near our church. A few weeks later, I began to hear rumors that many of the deacons were unhappy with the decision to allow blacks to come in after Easter. Then a couple of elders came to talk to me about it; they were aftraid that we would start losing members unless we changed our policy. I opposed this by reminding them that we had worked out a compromise that everyone had accepted. Then the elders said they wanted to call a Session meeting to discuss the problem. They said that wanted the congregation's input. I told them that we had done it the right way: the Session was the ruling body of the local church rather than the congregation in the Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless, they reminded me that the Book of Church Order required the minister to call a meeting when two elders requested it, and they wanted one called, so I had no choice. At the Session meeting, the decision was made to call a congregational meeting and ask for their advice and consent on what to do. At the congregational meeting we had people in attendance that I had never seen before, and some of them were claiming to be members. The motion was made to advise the Session to rescind its policy and to instate a policy that had been circulating around some of the churches that would exclude blacks. The vote was by secret ballot, and the deacon that was in charge of counting the ballot, Paul Mullendore, advised me the motion carried. I said

that I needed to know the exact count and he refused to tell me. I told him that as moderator that was my right, and if he did not let me know, I would declare the whole meeting out of order. He gave me the count, and it was about two thirds for advising no blacks, and one third for letting them come.

The two elders wanted an immediate meeting to institute the new policy, and before we met, I wrote the following letter to be read to the Session:

June 26, 1964

To the Session of the Magnolia Presbyterian Church

Beloved Brothers in the Lord;

This letter anticipates your acting favorably upon the advice of the Congregation to exclude certain groups from this church.

With great heaviness of heart and without meaning to condemn anyone, I heregy request that the Session call a Congregational meeting on Sunday July 12 after the Morning Worship Service for the purpose of asking the Congregation to concur with me in a request to South Mississippi Presbytery to dissolve my pastoral relationship with this church effective July 31.

The decision is not made because of any ill feeling toward you or the congregation. I never expect on this earth to meet a people who will show me and my family more consideration and kindness than you have. My decision is made because your action makes manifest that I have failed you as your leader in not adequately preaching and teaching the Christian viewpoint of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man as presented in the Scripture and interpreted by our church. In addition, your decision lays an intolerable burden on my conscience.

I hereby request that this letter be made part of the permanent records of this church by being atached to the minutes of the Session.

Yours in Christ,

Richard O. Young

Again we met as a joint body of the Session and Diaconate, and at the meeting, I had the floor as moderator, so I read my letter first. Then one of the members of the Session asked that the official minutes of the Congregational meeting be read, and after that was done, he moved that the church adopt a policy toward the seating of the blacks that he claimed was now being used by the local Baptist Churches. It read as follows:

TO: The Congregation

FROM: The Church Officers: Session & Diaconate

In an effort to clarify our position in the midst of the current racial turmoil, we have adopted the

follwing policies which we believe to be adequate for the present and the future. We consider these pronouncements as meeting the tests of Christian love, while facing squarely and fairly the facts of life as we see them and being necessary to protect the good order of our Christian Services:

I. We have no request from any member of the Negro race for membership in our church, nor do we anticipate such a request. All such applications for membership will be denied. We believe this policy is essential to the peace and tranquility of our Church, and is in the best interest of both races.

II. We refuse to be intimidated by "Kneelers" and "Sitters" and others lacking a true spirit of reverent worship, and such who present themselves at our Church will be promptly, quietly and firmly denied admittance. We believe to do otherwise would violate the poeaceful and refined atmosphere necessary for Holy Worship.

III. Since the founding of this church in _____.,members of the Negro race have been admitted and seated at our weddings, our funerals, and our regular preaching services, at specified places in the sancuturary. We are not willing to formally discontinue this practice of long standing, but will seat on an individual basis, in designate4d pews, those who present themselves in the right spirit in accordance with our established practices and traditions.

IV. To implement this policy, a Committee of six men (3 Elders and 3 Deacons) has been appointed. They are willing to handle these matters according to the above stated polices and purposes; and should they desire or require the assistance of others, they will request it.

To these ends we solicit your support and forbearance, with the result that the peace and harmony of our Church may be maintained andwe mnay be allowed to pursue the purposes for which Christ established his Church. We believe we can ride out these storms with dignity, and patience, avoiding bitterness and ugliness and maintaining the good influence of this Church. Having agreed on these policies, your Church Officers feel that no useful purpose is served by indiscriminate discussion of these delicate matters."

The motion was passed and the policy was adopted. At the same time, a request was made to me to reconsider my intention to resign my pastorate if they took this action, and I agreed to their request. On July 3, 1964, I wrote the Session a final letter in which I said, "Upon your request, I have engaged in a considerable amount of prayer and soul searching regarding my decision to terminate my pastorate here .....However, my prior decison was based on a spiritual conviction which remains, and it is evident that we have basic differences in the understanding of the church and its ministry. I understand the gospel to be for all men in all conditions, even for those who who persecute and despitefully use us. I understand the church to be for the poor as well as the wealthy, the negro as well as the white, and for all people whatever their condition. That these people have a church of their own which they can attend does not change my view of the responsibility of this church. The Church is God's House, and we have no moral or spiritual right to exclude anyone. Your decision of June 26 to exclude negroes from membership and to close the doors to mixed groups seeking entrance cuts across my belief, and places an intolerable burden on my conscience as a minister of the gospeL"

I again requested the Session to call a Congregational Meeting to concur with me to have my pastoral relationship dissovled, and this time they did as I requested. Soon after this, the Presbytery of South Mississippi met, and the Commission on the Minister and His Work called me before them to explain my actions. Dr. Richard Summers of Gulport told me if I would apologize to the church, they might still take me back and keep me as their pastor. I let him know that this was a matter of principle with me, and I had no intention of going back. The Presbytery dissolved my pastoral relationship, and placed my name on the rolls as a pastor without a charge.

I had made my resignation effective one month later, and during this month I tried to find another church. I wrote to Dr. James McCord, the President at Princeton, who had been my dean at Austin, and sought his help. He turned me over to the heirarchy of the United Presbyterian Church, and I received a long letter detailing a long procedure to get into their system. I simply did not have the time for the several months this procedure would require, so I did not even bother to apply. I wrote to our General Assembly Office on the Minister and His Work, and told them I had felt led by the Spirit to take this stand, and sought their aid in relocation. I received an answer from Mr. Charles M. Harris, Asst. to the Exec. Secretary in which he said, "Naturally, we are in full agreement with you that one must at all times follow the leading of the Spoirit..., however, I would say that when we move over into the area of church relations with ministers and into the area of churches seeking pastors and ministers seeking new pulpits, we are in the great "grey" area of life.." In another letter, Mr. Harris said that it was very hard to relocate a minister that had not served a congregation for at least two and a half years, and he didn't see much possibility for me. I could see plainly that I could expect no help from them. Even though our denomination had made some broad statements in support of the inclusion of blacks, when I stood up for the position our church had taken, I did not receive any backing.

The Presbyterian minister at the McComb Church, Dr. Frank Galt Robertson, told me that he had some friends in Kentucky that might help me locate there, and upon his recommendation, the church at Millersville agreed to interview me. Also, I had written Dr. McDowell Richards at Columbia Seminary, and he was able to get an interview for me at a non-denominational church out in the piney woods at Warm Springs, Georgia. Richie and I made a quick automobile trip to these two places. The manse at the Kentucky church had large cracks in the floor, and it was a pretty poor situation. I could not see Madge wanting to live so far out in the woods in Georgia. I was beginning to get dispirited, because my time was nearing the end, and I had no place to go. I believe also that I made a mistake in taking Richie. He understood our desperate situation, and he became aware of the tremendous lack of support we were receiving. I believe this might have embittered him to our church, although he has never said so.

But I had written Henry Quinius, the Field Director at Austin Seminary, and he came through for me. He recommended me to the DeRidder, La. church, and they were willing to take me.

Before I left Magnolia, I had two experiences which made me feel a good deal better toward the folks there. One was the support of Margaret Leggett, who was the mother of the

young deacon Thad who had supported me in my stand. As my funds were becoming more questionable, she made several gifts to me that really helped us out. Another was the mother of Dr. Claude Pettey, one of the main elders. Mrs. Pettey left a note on the pulpit for me begging me to reconsider and stay. She said they might be black sheep, but they were sheep and they needed a shepherd. I will always appreciate her note. It did make me wonder if perhaps I had done wrong in leaving, but I tried to make my decision not only on hard principle, but on human kindness. I will leave it in the Lord's hands as to whether I did right or wrong.

Also, I felt good that Madge's folks supported me one hundred percent. Her kinfolks in Magnolia were all Baptist or Methodist, and they never wavered in their support. But more than that, Mr. Mixon and the Osyka folks gave me strong words of encouragement. To those who think that all Mississippians are racist, I have to say, "It ain't necessarily so."

CHAPTER XIII

SINKING TO THE BOTTOM

I have heard several stories about ministers taking a call under extreme circumstances. One story tells how the minister has been called to a higher paying pastorate, and while he is down stairs in the study asking divine guidance on what to do, his wife is upstairs packing. Another story tells how the pastor wants the new place so badly that while the congregation is meeting to determine if they will call him, the moving van is circling the block around the manse.

My situation more nearly fits the second description. I had only about a week remaining before I would have been out of a place to live, so I was really glad to get the opportunity to go to DeRidder. However, again I saw many negatives as well as some positives in that situation. For example, the manse itself was really old and by the Bonham standard, was definitely substandard and very unattractive. The back bedroom had been a back porch, and the flooring was thin. Most of the walls were off plumb, and all were painted with a drab color. An old garage in the back was practically rotted down. A dusty alley way went right past our kitchen door, and many people used it. Added to this, the pay was even lower than it had been at Magnolia, which had hardly been enough to live on.

The church sanctuary was also old and unattractive, and it was on the same block with the manse. But the annex building which contained the fellowship hall and several classrooms as well as the study was a new building: it was well planned, its rooms were spacious and well appointed, and it had a positive affect on the whole physical layout.

The congregation of the church was divided in about three ways. First, there were the town people and they were in the majority. They were a fairly stable population, and some of them were quite well-off. Next were the service people who either lived in DeRidder and communted to Fort Polk, or lived near Fort Polk and commuted to church on Sundays. They were far from stable: they made a great contribution to the liveliness of the church and often were very dedicated, but there was a continuous tum-over among them. And finally there were the country people. Some of them, such as the Hawkes and Hunts, had been members of the church for several generations, but others, such as the Smiths, were really Baptists who had somehow come under the Presbyterian umbrella.

Clarence Smith was one of the elders of the church, but he was also the lead lay-person at a mission church west of town near the Texas line. Twice monthly we woul;d have preaching services at the mission, and it was always well attended. The church house had no air conditioning so in the summer, we had to leave the doors and windows open. It had screens, but a tremendous number of bugs worked their way in and continuously buzzed around the light. One night one of them flew in my mouth and lodged in my throat as I was taking a breath during a sermon. I did not wish to take the time to cough him up, so I swallowed him. We would always have informal singing, and allow members to suggest their own songs. Invariably one of

the Smith boys named Chester would ask for "Standing On The Promises," and so one evening I asked him if he knew what some of those promises were. He answered, "No, I just like the tune." His dad Clarence told me the first cemetary joke I remember hearing. The cemetary adjoining the church was having a large fence put up, and Clarence told me that the reason for the fence was that so many people were just dying to get in the cemetary. Later In Louisville, the manager of the large Cave Hill Cemetary, Lee Squires, was a member of our Harvey Browne Church, and when I asked him about his job, he said he had about two hundred thousand people under him. So much for those kind of jokes.

Clarence Smith raised sheep, and he claimed that if he sheared the wool at the wrong phase of the moon, the new wool would grow out at a much slower pace. His brother Herbert raised goats, and he told how they killed a young goat and barbecued him for the church. He said all day long they barbecued that goat, applying a certain sauce that was well laced with tobasco, and at the end of the day it was some of the best barbecue he ever ate. The Smiths, and others in the mission church were very interesting people.

The Hawkes and Hunts lived on farms at the north end of the parish, and they did not get along even though Mr. Hawkes was Mrs. Hunt's brother. The Hawkes had several girls, and their house was filled with roaches. One day when I visited, I saw several roaches crawling (and in the middle of the day, no less) on the couch, and several crawling on the Hawke girls' clothing. I would always watch for the food that the Hawkes brought to Family Night Suppers so I could dodge it.

The Hawkes had a lot of geese that always came greet me, but their intentions were not friendly: often the ganders would try to attack me by pecking at my legs. Also the Hawkes had two mean-spirited curs that were mangy and poorly fed. Once when the family was out in the woods picking up chestnuts, I drove in, and got out of the car with the intention of knocking on their door. I was met by the two dogs, and I could see that they were serious. Their hair was standing up on their necks, and one would try to get my attention in front while the other was trying to attack me from the rear. I backed toward my car, and just as I turned to get in, one of the dogs took out the seat of the pants of my best suit.

The Hunts appeared to be more cultured than the Hawkes. Mrs. Hunt was a school teacher, and Mr. Hunt was an elder. I remember that their daughter was about the same age as Richie. In fact, I believe she had a crush on Richie, but I am not too sure that Rich was ever interested. He was only about twelve or thirteen at the time. The girl liked to collect butterflies, and I imagine she had about two hundred different specimens. I never realized that there were that many different kinds of butterflies.

We had some rich folks in the church that lived on a large estate south of town, the Crosbys. They owned more than a million acres of timberland, as well as the huge chemical and paint factory in town. I went to visit them a couple of times by appointment, and was met by a red-jacketed coachman. They later quit our church, and there were two possible reasons for it. One was the fire that they had at their plant in which several people were severely burned.

I went to see the victims and learned that even though their medical bills were being paid, there would be several weeks in which they received no pay and then the workmen's compensation would kick in. They had not caused the fire: they had simply been doing their work when the fire started. They had no union to redress the problem. I tried to help them out, and that got me no points with the Crosbys. Also, a little earlier I had preached a sermon on the ills of alcohol, and I did not realize at the time that Mr. Crosby was a rather heavy drinker. All in all, it was enough to make them join the Episcopal Church, whose minister had been after them pretty heavily.

Another reason the Crosbys might have fallen out with our church was the Barbi family, who were probably more of the negro race than the white. In the DeRidder area, they and many other similar people were known as "red-bones:" they were a mixture of Portugese, Indian, and black, and they had many features of black people including dark skin. However, if anyone even suggested that they were black people, they would take heavy offense. There were several Barbi children and they were about the same age as the Crosby children so they all attended the same class. The Sunday School teacher really played up to the Crosby children and fairly ignored the Barbi children, but in the end she lost all of them. The Barbis joined the Baptists at a revival meeting, and the Crosbys went Episopalian.

One day two of the Barbi children came to my study really excited. They said their mother had sent them: she had a headache and she wanted me to come pray for her head. I took the children in the car back to their home about a half mile away, and was greeted at the door by a black man. The children told me he was their "Uncle Hotshot." The mother was laying on the couch moaning. She asked me to pray for her head. This was an unusual request: usually people simply asked for prayer that they would get better, or pray for healing. I did as requested: I prayed for her head.

Working for the Crosbys as one of their main executives was Mr. Price who was also a member of our church. He was a real fine person, but he and I did have a couple of ruptures in our relationship. During that time I was at my lowest point in terms of salary; we were just making enough to make ends meet. As I recall, counting the value of the manse, all benefits, and the salary, it was about seven thousand annually. I was talking to Mr. Price one day about income tax, and I said that I did not have to pay any tax that year. Mr. Price told me I should be thankful: his salary was thirty thousand, and since his only dependent was his wife, he had to pay more tax than my salary. I did not feel too good about his insensitivity. On another occasion, Mr. Price asked me if we liked duck meat. We had never had any, but I told him we probably would. He said he would bring us one the next time he went duck hunting. A few weeks later he brought a duck with feathers plucked, but otherwise, it had not been prepared for cooking. It was the smallest duck I could imagine, about the size of a little chick. I took it home, and Madge put it in the refridgerator, and there it stayed until we finally decided to throw it away. A few weeks later Mr. Price asked me how we liked the duck, and I said fine. Then he said, "Madge didn't really cook it, did she?" and I admitted she hadn't. A chill seemed to drop.

One person I came to really like in DeRidder was a certain Mr. Farquhar, the husband of one of our members. The family lived in the country and seemed to like many of the things I liked, so I visited with them often. Their daughter was in college, but she attended church occasionally when she was home over the week-end. Before she graduated, she decided to get married, and she wanted the use of our church for the ceremony. But she did not want me for the officiating minister: she wanted the college chaplain where she attended. I made the arrangements for her, but I was angry about the situation. It seemed to me that if I had no relationship to her as pastor, then I had no relationship at all. I decided to not attend the wedding. Needless to say, I was wrong. I should have swallowed my pride and gone. The Farquhar family was never friendly to me after that.

It was while we were at DeRidder that I decided to augment my salary by doing some high school teaching in math. The local school had need of a teacher on a part-time basis, but I really was not interested in teaching the lower classes. An arrangement was made for me to teach a physics class, a strong math class, and a biology class. I could handle the math and physics easily since I had majored in math and minored in physics at college, but I had to study my biology each week to stay ahead of the students. Fortunately the biology class was for the lowest one third of the students, and was a very simple course. But I really enjoyed both the physics and math classes, and felt that I made some real contributions to the lives of several young people. In addition, the added income really helped.

One thing that teaching did was to enable me to buy a little land. I had talked with Madge many times about wanting to borrow money to buy land, but she never did agree. It was too much of a risk for the small resources we had. But one day after I was teaching she found an advertisement that she casually mentioned to me: forty acres of land were selling for only fifty dollars per acre. Since she did not seem too opposed to our buying it, I quickly investigated, and found out that the land was deep in the woods north of DeRidder, and about four or five miles from the nearest road. I considered it ideal, but I did not know how to locate it exactly. One of my army friends said he had a topographical map the army published of the area and I could locate the land on it, which I did. The map showed the northest comer to be about one hundred yards from the point where a creek and a branch met, and this in tum was about one half mile south of a black topped road, about five miles west of where the black top met the main highway. I borrowed a good compass, got in the car and drove exactly five miles down the black top, used the compass to go directly south, and I found the meeting place of the branch and main creek just where I expected. Then I stepped off one hundred yards eastward using the compass, and drove down a stake. Then I searched through the fallen leaves and I found the marker for the section comer within fifteen feet of where I put down my stake. My determination of the area was further confirmed by the topogrophy of the land which rose 135 feet from the base of the creek to the top of the hill.

This place was exceedingly difficult to reach in a car, since the only entrance was a dirt road that loggers and hunters used. The soil was very sandy, and in dry weather it was easy to get stuck in the sand. But there were also stretches that became muddy in wet weather, so wet or dry, one might get stuck.

I do not think I could ever have taken greater pleasure in working on a piece of land than I did on that one. It was an exceedingly high hill for that area, and offered a view for miles and miles. There were many thorn bushes on the land that I undertook to clear off, but there were hundreds of different kinds of plants growing there. Wild grapes grew in abundance; I found a kind of tangerine orange colored bean that Indians must have used for beads; there was one beech nut tree that had a swarm of bees in it. I found several "toothache bark" trees on the land, so named because it was said that Indians used to chew their bark for its narcotic effect when they had a toothache. Campers at Presbytery camps would call them "tongue-tinglers" for the same reason. The real name was prickly ash. In the creek, there was a very large moccasin snake that I decided to kill, but I never could hit it with my .22 rifle. An FBI agent attended our church, and he said that he could get it with his pistol, but he missed it too. There was a fire ant bed about twenty feet in diameter, and I got rid of it by driving down a pipe into it in several places, and pouring some kind oil recommended by the forestry service into the pipe.

One friend I had made in DeRidder was named Bob Watt, and he was connected with the forestry service. One day I took our chevrolet out in the woods with the all the children and somehow, when I started to tum aound, I got stuck in the sand. The more I tried to get out the worse it got, and finally I was headed straight down hill with a tree right in front of me; I was unable to back up or go forward. The children and I began our long walk out of the woods - I carried Greg since he was too small to walk very far, and he was a real load to carry. Finally when we got to the main highway, I called my friend Bob and he came to get us in his truck. I barely made it back for prayer meeting that night. The next day Bob and I went back to get the car. I had imagined that we would have to get a tractor, and I could see the cost mounting. But Bob said it should be easy to get out. He cut down the tree in front of the car low to the ground with his chain saw, and he told me to drive down that hill for a ways, and after I gathered some speed, to start up the hill again, and never slow down. He said I should mark out the path I intended to follow before I started so I could be sure of the way I was going. We did it this way, and it worked out fine. But it was scary.

During our last year there, my brother-in-law Richard Polakovich had 700 seedling cypress that he was unable to sell, and he offered them to me free to plant on my hill. I did have an acre or so that was almost bare of trees, but I told him that I did not think cypress would grow up on a hillside. He might not have known just high a hill we were talking about; at any rate, he assured me that cypress did not need all that much moisture as was commonly thought. We got a dibble, and Richie and I planted all those trees on the hill, except for about twenty that we planted near the creek. Only those planted near the creek survived.

One advantage of being in DeRidder was our nearness to Forest Hill, which was only about fifty mile distance. I had not been near myoid home much since I had left in 1939, and during my stay in DeRidder we were able to go as often as we liked. Even then, most of my old schoolmates were gone, and the place was drastically changed. Still my parents were alive, and Robert and Edith and most of their children were in the area, as were also Ruby and her family. Once while we were there, Robert needed an extra hand on his nursery during the summer, and we let Richie go over there for a couple of weeks to live with them and work for

Robert I think: Richie decided he did not like that kind of work before the two week period was over.

As a regular part of the church call to pastors, four whole week's vacation is always allowed, but until 1967 we had never taken the full time, mainly because we could not afford it. But that year, some people in our church named Lesters told us about family camping which was very inexpensive. A campsite could be rented each night for for only a dollar or two ; food could be purchased at regular grocery stores and cooked over the camp fire; and the only substantial cost was for gasoline . Later we bought a tent and all the paraphernalia that goes with it, but that year we borrowed most of the equipment, and started on a thirty day vacation using the boy scout's trailer to carry our stuff. We went up the east coast, camping along the way, and our northernmost point was Montreal where we attended Expo 67. One mishap occurred in Pennsylvania at Happy Days Campground when Greg fell out the back of the trailer and hit his nose on a stone. He was about four at the time, and for weeks, his face was terribly disfigured. But the doctor said no bone was broken and he finally got over it.

We had a great time at Lake Louie in New York, riding canoes, and exploring the island in the middle of it. Then in Montreal, we had a wonderful time riding their futuristic machines, and mixing with the crowd. We could not understand the French language spoken there so we were fairly unsuccessful in ordering food or making other purchases. The time of the year was July, but the temperature got down into the thirties while we were there, and our tent did not give us all that much protection against the elements. Going back through New York, I was careful to plan carefully to travel on interstates so we would not have to go through Newark, New Jersey: we had a Louisiana liscense plate, and they had just had some serious race riots there. However, it was right at that exact place that we were told we would have to get off the interstate with our trailer because of strong wind. As we had not even planned for any aternative route, we soon found ourselves right in the middle of Newark, the one place we did not want to be. However, we were not molested in any way. On the way back we spent some time at Myrtle Beach, and then on through north Florida where someone ran into the rear end of our trailer. We were unharmed, but they smashed their front end. Luckily, we were not to blame. When we arrived home, both trailer tires were worn out; in fact one was so badly worn that the inner tube was protruding through it. We took many more camping trips, but nothing ever matched this first one.

Two people who were very significant to us died during our stay in DeRidder. Mr. Mixon, Madge's father, died in 1968. Knowing that he was low, Madge went over to be with him at the end, and at the time of his death, As she had taken our car, I borrowed a car from our neighbor, Mr. Scroggins, a Purina salesman who lived in the huge two-storied house that our church owned on the same block with the manse and the church. Not only was Mr. Mixon Madge's father, he had been my religious mentor in many ways. We still miss the good times we used to have when we visited Osyka, and would listen to some of the stories he told.

It was during this time, in 1969, that Dad died after a long illness with sugar diabetes and various allergies. Mama had put him in a rest home during the last six months of his life. Dad

was an outdoors person, and he really loved to be with people. My chief memory of him is his talk about wanting to go fishing, which he got to do litle of. He never enjoyed life anymore after he was put in the rest home I believed that did as much to hasten his passing as any disease he might have had. However, Dad did get to live until men went into space. It was during this year also that our first spacemen landed on the moon. This has significance to me because on the night I left to join the Navy, Dad and I sat on the font porch and looked up at the moon shining brightly. Dad said, "Richard, when you are far away over the ocean, you can look up at the moon and remember us, because we will be looking at it too, and we will be thinking of you." Very often, when I look up and see the moon shining, I still think of Dad and remember his words.

We never had any racial troubles while we were in DeRidder: however, at first, I thought we might be in for some. It was only a week or so after I got moved that Mr. Waddell Williams, an elder in the church and a graduate of Davidson College, came down to the manse with a newspaper in his hand. He asked if I had read Drew Pearson's column. I said no, and he showed me the article. It told how the Presbyterian minister and the Episcopalian minister in Magnolia, Mississippi had been forced out of their pulpits due to the racial situation. Drew Pearson was a nationally syndicated writer, and Mr. Williams was sure that others would see it. He was afraid the congregation would think I was a radical. I never heard any more about the matter, but nevertheless, it might have accounted for one strange event that followed.

Mrs. McMahon and her sister Det were two of our members and they lived together across the street from the manse. Mrs. McMahon's husband had died many years before, and Miss Det was a maiden lady. They had been reared in north Louisiana, and were about the strictest people I ever met. Miss Det would not drink Coca Cola; she said it would rust her pipes. Mrs. McMahon was the janitor for the church, and she was also one who made it her business to keep up with people who attended church. She would stand at the door on Sunday morning and look people over as they entered. If someone had missed the previous Sunday, she would want to know why. She believed that all Austin Presbyterian Seminary graduates were communists, and that included me. When Madge told her that I had fought in World War II, that still did not sway her opinion. Regularly she partook of our hospitality in taking her places, but even that did not alter her opinion. The strange event occurred in this way: I had become interested in helping locally unemployed youth to find jobs, and to this end I wrote for information about the newly created Job Corps. I did not receive a brochure of information as I requested, but I did receive about twenty large two by three feet posters promoting the Job Corps. When I recived them, the day was Saturday, and as I had no earthly use for them, I put them behind my desk with the idea of destroying them the following week. That afternnon Mrs. McMahon came to clean the church, and she must have found the posters. On Sunday morning when I came into the fellowship hall, there were Job Corp posters hung around at every available space. Of course, I took them down. But it was my guess that Mrs. McMahon was trying to expose me for the pro-communist liberal that she perceived me to be.

I believe that Mrs. McMahon really liked Madge. She had a wealthy sister, Mrs. P. W. West, who lived near town, and whose husband owned a chain of stores. Mrs. West was a

member but seldom if ever attended church. Every Christmas, Mrs. McMahon would make it her business to try to get Mrs. West to buy us a turkey. I am sure that she did this on account of Madge, because as I said, she always regarded me with great suspicion.

During our stay in DeRidder, I became aware that my lack of prestige and our moving from one place to another was affecting our children adversely. All our children had some difficulty in making friends in school, and I was sure a large part of it had to do with the fact that we were not very well off, and we lived in Baptist country. At this time Richie was beginning to show an extraordinary ability in painting, and in making good grades in school. Jean was a very beautiful girl, but she seemed to lack self confidence. However, she had no reason to not think well of herself: she did exceedingly well with her music and her studies. It was during this time that Sally joined the 4 H Club, and wanted to go camping with the 4 H'ers at Camp Pollack, about two hours drive away. Madge and I let her go, thinking that she would be with many more her age. It turned out that all the others were teen-agers and Sally was the only one of the lower grades. Madge and I drove up one night just to be sure she was all right, and we found her walking by herself after dark around the camp. We started to bring her back with us, but the counselors assured us they were taking good care of her. As for Greg, I remember measuring his height at about this time; the top of his head came to the bottom of our kitchen table, the one we still own and use.

During our last year in DeRidder, Madge and I decided that it would be better for Greg to break a bad habbit he had acquired from babyhood. He loved to hold a blanket wrapped around his hand, with his thumb in his mouth. We were afraid that it would cause his teeth to protrude, and as he was now about four so I devised a plan to gradually bring an end to the problem. I cut his blanket in two, and he continued to use one half of it as before. I cut it in two again, and I continued this process until he had a piece about one inch square. He continued trying to wrap it around his hand for a time, but finally he gave up and quit sucking his thumb. (Sorry, Greg.)

I tried to make the best of the experience in DeRidder, but I was aware that from every indicator, this was about the least desirable place for a Presbyterian pastor. We were well into the backwoods with no town of consequence nearby. The people of the area were not Presbyterian in background or inclination. The house we lived in was marginal, and the salary was never above the minimum. Mter about three years, I began to look for another opportunity, and was recommended for the church in Stuttgart, Arkansas, which I decided to investigate.

We were really excited about the prospect of moving to another church, and we were paid the expense of going up to look the church over. I had always heard about the mountains in Arkansas, and when I looked on a map, I found severl towns with the word "bluff' in their names situated nearby, for example "Pine Bluff," and "De Val's Bluff." Thus I thought Stuttgart would be in the middle of mountains. But as we passed through Pine Bluff, I was beginning to wonder where the mountains could be, since it was fairly flat there, and Stuttgart was only about twenty five miles away. As we got nearer Stuttgart, there were still no mountains, but all at once across the vast flat prairie we saw a huge city of skyscrapers in the distance. This turned out to

be Suttgart, situated on land as flat as any I have ever seen. And the "skyscrapers" were nothing more than huge storage buildings for the tremendous amount of rice and beans that this area produced.

We stayed that night in the Town House Motel, and I had a close call there on account of the way they labeled the restrooms. As we learned later, Stuttgart was very proud of its self proclaimed title of "Duck Capital of the World," and many of the motifs in town reflected that pride. Among these was the way that the motel labeled its restrooms. I started for a door marked, "hen," and it did not even occur to me that this was for females, but just as I was opening the door, I looked at the word again, and became puzzled at the misspelling. Then I looked at the other door and it was marked "drake." As I said, this was a close call.

Everything about Stuttgart impressed us as being a more favorable place to work than was DeRidder, so we made plans to move when we were extended a call. However, we did have one more experience that reminded me of the kind of esteem in which we were held while in DeRidder. Mr. Waddell Williams came down to my office while I was packing my books, and he said, "Don't take those Encylopedia Brittanicas, they belong to the church." In fact they did not belong to the church; they had been given to me at Austin Seminary by Professor Norman Dow, as they were out of date and not needed by the library. He knew I loved old books and would put them to good use. I told Mr. Williams as much, but I have to admit that his words were hurtful. Later when Madge and I came back to Lafayette, his wife Gladys called us: they lived in Opelousas and wanted us to come see them. I was not all that excited about seeing Waddell again, so we were never able to make it

CHAPTER X IV

STUTIGART: THE LAND OF PLENTY

In away, Stuttgart was all that we could ever wish for: they had a strong church, there were great opportunities for growth, and the town was a nice place to live. I do not think: we met nicer people anywhere than we met in Stuttgart.

The church sanctuary itself was almost new, and was built in the most attractive design. Quite obviously, colors and furniture had been expertly chosen. This building was attached to the old sanctuary which had not been tom down but had been converted to a fellowship hall with classrooms. But the most classroom space was afforded by the old manse which was connected by a walkway. The old manse had a large downstairs room for the young couples class, and also two other rooms for the church office and the study. Upstairs was the nursery and a couple of classrooms for younger children.

The manse was located about a mile from the church and although it was a frame building, it was fully air-conditioned. It was large enough for our family, and all-in-all it was a nice place to live. The community was a rather quiet place with mostly older people. Two of our close neighbors were members of our church.

Our next-door neighbors, the Lowes, were an older couple and really fme people. However, they did have their peculiar ways. For example, he had built a fence to separate the church property from his, but he had built it about seven feet over on his side. I did not realize that the fence was not the dividing line, so I mowed the yard right up to the fence. When I started to put in a garden, I went clear over to the fence with my rows, but Mrs. Lowe came out and stopped me. She said I was on her property. I apologized and told her I did not know. This was the only time we had any disagreement at all, and even then, Mrs. Lowe was not abrasive in the way she spoke. Mr. Lowe once told me that his name was in the Bible: Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always." All in all, we could not have asked for better neighbors.

At the church, the most going concern seemed to be the Young Adult Sunday School class. Teaching the class was John Guffin, a young executive who worked as an administrator at the local hospital. In the class were several prosperous young business people of the community, as well as teachers and others. Most of them had three or four children, or were beginning to have children, so it seemed that this church would be very strong for many years to come. But things change. It did not happen all at once, but nevertheless, before I left, this class had almost completely disintegrated.

The first thing that happened was that John Guffin and his wife, Bonnie, began to have trouble: she claimed that he physically abused her when he started drinking. One day she came to see me and spoke in a way that I did not at first decipher: she said that when a marriage is without love, it will not be long until there will be love without a marriage. Soon she divorced John and started getting involved with one of the doctors at the hospital and then I learned what

she meant. Mter their divorce, John continued to teach, and for a while Bonnie continued to come to church with the children. But I knew that could not go on long after I heard one of the children say to John in the presence of members of the class: "Daddy, why don't you come home?"'

The break-up of John and Bonnie was only the beginning. Soon one of the regular members and his wife bought a summer home at a nearby resort, and their family began to spend the week-ends there. Another young man who worked in the bank was offered a better job in Florida, and they moved. One family after the other moved to other locations, and within a year or so, the class was only a shell of its former self.

However, there was a very strong cadre of old time members in the church, and the most reliable of these were found on the Session. Among these was Carl Yohe, a farmer who lived with his wife Alma about four miles from town. The Yohes had a large farm of about 1600 acres, and they raised mostly rice and soybeans, both of which were very profitable. The land itself was then worth more than $1000 per acre, and is now worth several times as much. Carl had been farming this land for many years, and I am sure that he had saved most of his income: the Yohe family was probably very rich. Every month Carl and Alma paid in a very good amount to the church, and at the end of the year, they always gave a special gift of $4200. The church was at the very center of their lives.

But Carl was a very peculiar person. He usually went to the Presbytery meetings with me since he chaired the important Presbytery committee on church development. He liked to pick up bottles on the highway, and he would often stop his truck, and he would go up one side of the road and I the other to look for bottles. He made a little extra money this way. Once he and I were returning from a Synod meeting in Oklahoma, and he stopped for gasoline. There was a phone booth across the highway, and without saying anything, Carl walked across to the phone. I thought he was calling Mrs. Yohe to tell her that we were late, so I asked him if she was expecting us. He said he had not made a call; he said that often people will leave a quarter in the phone and he was just checking it out. Carl nearly always wore the clothes of the farmer, and farmer's boots. No one would have ever guessed that he was a multi-millionaire.

A peculiar incident happened soon after we went to Stuttgart. Carl and Alma Yohe had taken a trip to Cape Cod, had worshiped in the church where young Peter John Marshall pastored, and had spoken to him. When they returned they told me about it, and suggested that I write him and ask him to hold some special evangelistic meetings for our church, and I agreed to do it. I got a warm response, and was told to set the time. Everything was going fine, but then Mr. Yohe wanted me to ask him to talk to our Presbytery executive about taking a church in Arkansas while he was in Stuttgart. Marshall wrote back and said if I was trying to trick him into taking a church in Arkansas, forget it. I made the mistake of reading the letter to the Session, and every single member of the Session said that if Marshall felt that way, forget about coming for our evangelistic meeting. That was how close I got in obtaining a big-name person to come to Stuttgart.

Another wealthy man was Hugh Spicer. Hugh was a bachelor, but when he was younger he had dated our organist, Geraldine Ray. All of the Spicers except Hugh were Methodists, and I always suspected Hugh of being half Methodist. He was much against any kind of alcohol beverage, even wine. He attended Presbytery once, and they served real wine. He said that this was the first time that an alcohol beverage had passed his lips, and it was at a church meeting! He vowed never to attend Presbytery again. As this part of the autobiography is being written in October, 1993, Hugh Spicer, in his mid-nineties, is still alive although he does need day-round care.

Bill Moorehead, another member of the Session was a very successful lawyer who had attended the Presbyterian college Southwestern in Memphis. He liked to talk rough and he dropped a few curse words now and then, but one time I found out how soft he was. He was superintendent of the Sunday School and he became ill with some kind of back trouble that laid him up in the hospital a week or so. While he was there, I bought a card and had all the Sunday School children to sign it. When Bill saw that card, tears began to flow. But he was tough as nails in the courtroom, even to the point of getting people off that were guilty. He told me he had absolutely no qualms about that; he said government prosecutors had almost unlimited resources in proving someone guilty, and all he had was his skills in defending them. But still, I think he often overdid it.

One of the few times I got a traffic ticket was in Stuttgart. I came to a yield sign, stopped, looked both ways, and seeing no one, I started across the street. Just at that time a truck came bearing down on me, and the driver was not even looking ahead; I stopped and he plowed into me. The officer gave me a ticket. I talked to Bill Moorehead about it and he said that since I had the yield sign, I was automatically in the wrong, but if I wanted him to come before the judge and try to get me off since I was a minister, he would try. I told him I would rather he didn't.

Shannon Flowers was another strong elder on the Session. He worked as a postman, and delivered mail in town. People told me that they often saw him reading their post cards as he was walking down the street delivering them. Shannon was a big talker: he claimed that he had been a champion wrestler and that he had played football in college. He was a very likeable fellow. But I kind of soured on him before we left Stuttgart. Once he and his wife Jean invited us to go to a nearby town to eat with them, and we were glad to do so. A few weeks later we asked them to go somewhere to eat with us but Shannon told me that we should look for other friends; we could not rely solely on them. This was a surprise to me and Madge: we were not aware that he we had been relying on them. But there was some truth in what he said: often it is most difficult in a small town where everybody already has their friends for a minister and his family to break in. Shannon and Jean came to see us after we moved to Van Buren, and they came to see us in Louisville and West Virginia as well. In all these places they stayed the night with us. In remembering Shannon's remark, I wondered if they were merely using us for their convenience. Nevertheless, we were glad to see them.

Helen Rhodes was one of the loveliest people, both in looks and character, that Madge

and I have met in the ministry. Invariably she was nice and outgoing to all people. But one day when I went by to visit her in her home, there was an exceedingly obese and sloppy looking fellow there without a shirt on. I could not imagine that he would be connected in any way to Helen: she was so refined and he was just the opposite. However, I later learned her story. An only child, she had been engaged to a Presbyterian minister years earlier, and her dad, who was superintendent of the schools, was really pleased. But a young airplane stuntman who liked to hang by his teeth from a plane, and do other daredevil stunts, won her away from the minister. Her dad was strongly opposed since he did not see any future for the young man. And he was right. Buddy Rhodes never did anything but sit in a big chair smoking a cigar. As a matter of fact, I was told that he had never provided a living for Helen: she had made a living for both of them by teaching, and she was retired at the time we were there. A terribly sad thing happened at the end. Helen had heart failure, and she was kept in the hospital on complete bed rest. She had some wonderful friends at the church, notably Mrs. Reid who was like a sister to her, but only Buddy and I were allowed to go in to see Helen. She was in the extensive care unit for about three weeks, and then she died without her friends ever being able to see her.

Another family that seemed to be genuinely our friends were the McLaughlins. They had been missionaries for our Presbyterian mission in Mrica where David had been a pilot. On their return to Almyra, Arkansas to get into the crop-dusting business, they began to attend our church. David and Marilyn's children Becky, Bonnie, Suzie, and Joey were younger than all of ours except Greg, but they were close enough to Sally's age to be friends with her. Marilyn invited us out to their house in the country once to have Indian Curry with them, and it was a most unusual and delightful dish. However, I would not care for it too often. Once David went to a Synod meeting with me in Austin after he was elected elder. He took his pop-up camper, and on the way we stayed overnight at a state park near a lake. It was a warm night, and we decided to take our bedroll down to the beach and sleep. The next morning when I awoke, David was not there, and there was the heavy odor of a skunk. Later I asked him what happened, and he told me that he saw the skunk prowling around, but he was afraid that if he awakened me, I would react and cause him to spray us. I was not too sure that I cared for the idea of being left to the mercy of a skunk.

On the way back from Austin, we came through DeRidder and visited my land and camped overnight on the high hill. The next morning the tent was covered with a heavy dew, and it reminded me of the drier and better air we had in Stuttgart. When we were in DeRidder, I had lent myoid Indian rock which I had plowed up as a boy to the Boy Scouts for them to use at their pow-wows. They had not returned it but I knew where they had kept it. David and I went by the place, and the scouts were no longer meeting there but I did notice a bump in the grass about where the rock had been when I last saw it. We took a knife and cut the grass and dirt apart, and there was the rock. I have kept the rock through the years, but when I left the West Virginia interim work (which I will talk about later) I gave away many of the things that I had been lugging around, and since Sally wanted the rock, I gave it to her.

Billy Moll was a deacon who owned the local Oldsmobile dealership and garage. I always believed his intentions were impeccable, but dealing with him did not always tum out the

way one might desire. For instance, his mechanics could never fix the motor of our '68 Mercury. Actually, the motor got worse and worse under their care. For example, at first there was only a little oil drip, but when they put in a larger plug to stop it, the drip got worse. I finally bought a new motor from them, but that motor blew up on the way to Montreat, and I had to buy another one. Then I bought a new 1975 Cutlass from him, but it never did do well. My troubles with it were legion, including several attempts to fix the cooling system, one replacement of the whole power system, a leaking trunk, a front windshield that admitted air, inside parts that would falloff, and on and on. Billy once told me he thought I was snake-bit. I prefer to believe that Olds are snake-bit. I knew Billy wasn't personally responsible for my car troubles, so I never held them against him. But I will never again buy an Oldsmobile.

Mter hearing that one of the math teachers at the local Junior High would have to be out a year, I asked the superintendent if he would like me to teach part-time while she was out, and he was quick to take me up. I taught three morning classes, and one of these was for the best students. Sally was supposed to be in the class, but since I was her dad, they decided that she probably would do better under another teacher. Also, I feel that my teaching might have hurt Sally in another respect. That year there were two candidates for top all round students to be selected by teachers: Sally and Susie Stone, whose father was a physician and whose mother was on the school board. I decided that I could not vote in an objective way so I did not cast a ballot. Susie won by one vote. If I had voted, it would have been a tie.

My advanced class was rather interesting as I had several very bright students. One was a black girl named Bonnie McDonald. She was about as good in math as any student I ever met. I talked to her about going to college, and I even was able to get Hugh Spicer to promise that he would foot the bill for four years in Arkansas College for her if she would go and maintain good grades. However, the next year, she got pregnant.

I had a problem with students doing messy work at first. They would erase several times and what they wound up with was unreadable. So I instituted a rule: there could be no erasures during a test unless they held up their hand and let me initial their paper. They got to thinking of me as an exceedingly tough teacher. For one test, a boy made a mistake on a problem, and he did not show much work so I could not see where he went wrong. Then I remembered that I had worked the problem at my desk and had come to the same wrong answer, but in checking it I had discovered the error and had corrected it. I was sure the boy had come up during the test and had seen my wrong answer. When I called him up to show how he got the answer, he couldn't explain it. I asked him if he had cheated from my work, and he said he had. On another occasion, I asked the class to measure around something round such as a jar lid to determine its circumference, and then measure across for its diameter to divide into it. This should approximate pi. One boy came in with exactly the value of pi carried out to about six decimal places. I looked at it and told him that he could not have done what I said, and he asked how I knew. I told him that whenever you divide one number into another you always get a repeating decimal fraction, and since his answer never began a sequence of repeating itself, I knew he had not done it. The class was beginning to think I was some kind of super-brain. It was because of respect built up from such experiences, and because of my extreme fairness to

all students, that I never had any discipline problems during my time.

Stuttgart had three unforgettable characteristics; the people, the mosquitoes, and the productivity of the land. The people were all just about the nicest people I have known. Even those with whom I did not always agree were likable. I do not think I met any dishonest, grasping, or malicious people while there. All of them were friendly, and very interesting to talk to. But the mosquitoes were as malicious as the people were good. They would swarm out over you as soon as the sun went down. If you opened the door to enter, you would carry a whole gang with you. It came to be a common occurrence in our home for one of us to jump up and clap our hands; nobody paid this any attention because everybody knew that they were aiming for a mosquito. And the land was a luscious green from early spring until late summer with rice and soybeans. The Lutheran minister told me he had been in the area for thirty five years and he had never seen a crop fail. The reason for this constancy was probably the irrigation system which watered nearly every farm in the area. In the fall, combines would be seen gathering in the rice and beans. What made this so memorable was the extent of it; as for as eye could see in any direction, workmen could be seen gathering in the harvest.

The Chamber of Commerce pushed the idea that Stuttgart was the "Duck Capital of the World," but I did not see too much in that. True they had a duck-calling contest once a year and an attending festival, but ducks never grabbed my attention. I did not hunt them, and did not care all that much about eating them. But I have to admit, they sure did have a lot of ducks flying over about harvest time.

I believe the children liked Stuttgart much better than DeRidder. Richie became more interested in art, and he painted several pictures that won prizes in the local exhibit. He was really good at painting and sketching portraits: he did an excellent sketch of Madge's mother, and he won a $50.00 prize for the painting of one of his friends, Robert Mills. It was during this time that he painted Greg with his cowboy duds on. We still have that painting and it hangs in our den. One of Richie's greatest achievements was his getting on the local TV program called the "High School BowL" Richie was quiet-spoken and others on the Stuttgart team would speak up more forcibly than he, but when he spoke, he was right. All of the others on the team recognized his ability, and when he gave an answer, they let it stand, even if they had another answer in mind. Richie graduated while we were in Stuttgart, and he started attending Hampden-Sydney in Virginia. He had a rough time in one subject the first year: his advisors advised him to take advanced math since he had done so well in math in high school, but if they had looked at his college entrance exam they would have noted that his outstanding grades were in literature, and other non-scientific courses. At any rate, he made a low grade in his freshman math, and if it had not been for that one grade, he would have graduated magna cum laude.

Jean continued in her music, and in Junior High, she became involved in cheer-leading. She had several friends that she related well with. While Jean was in the 11th grade, one of the math teachers in high school, the principal's wife, became ill and they asked me to stand in for her. By this time Sally was in High School, so I did have her in one of my classes after all. I found out why Rich did not know math. The teacher I replaced taught geometry, and when I

took over, she told me that she had all her tests lined up, and also the key to the answers. When I looked at her answers, I was amazed. Most of them were wrong. She did not have even a rudimentary knowledge of math. She had given Richie and others good grades to cover up her own ineptitude. I think I made one of Jean's friends, Kay Moore, mad at me that year. Kay's teacher wanted me to monitor a make-up test for Kay, and I kept close watch over her. She thought I did not put enough trust in her. It was uplifting for me to see Jean and Sally at work and at play enjoying their time in Stuttgart.

It was about that time that Greg started school. I probably made a mistake: I told him he had the choice of going to school or not, but if he wanted to be grow up and be smart, he would have to go to school. He assured me that he wanted to go. My own feeling is that wanting to learn is an inward decision, and is more important than the mere physical presence. Of course, he would have had to attend in any case, but luckily for me, it worked out. Greg has always done well in school, and perhaps my dissimulation had a little to do with it.

Mter we had been in Stuttgart about four years, I began to have a feeling of bum-out. I was now past fifty, and I did not think I was doing much with my life. Although we liked Stuttgart, it was still a rather small church, and there was not a lot of opportunity for growth. In addition, it was about that time that the young peoples' class fell apart, and I did not perceive that the work was going as well as I had hoped. To offset this despondency, I enrolled in Clinical Pastoral Education in Little Rock at the Baptist Hospital, and I began to see some value in this experience in helping to deal with inner conflicts, as well as a means of increasing my skills in helping others. Mter completing one half unit there, I applied for a full-time student and chaplain position for a nine month period in the Memphis Institute of Medicine and Religion. Mter being accepted there, I gained permission from the Session to keep my work in Stuttgart by preaching on Sunday and taking care of any emergency needs. My pay was cut, but the pay for my work as a chaplain more than compensated for it.

In away, this nine month period was a very exciting and useful time. I met a lot of new people, I had a lot of new ideas presented to me, and I felt that I was receiving training that would be of great benefit to me. But on the other hand, there were many minuses.

We were nine chaplains of different denominations working under the direction of the supervisor Lee Walsh, a Presbyterian. Most of our working days were spent visiting patients in the hospitals, but we also spent several hours weekly doing counseling, and once weekly we met for several hours to discuss our cases. We were expected to be open with our feelings, and willing to have our personal feelings examined. All the men I worked with were younger than I and most of them had ideas about the ministry that really did not meet the standard I had set for myself. One of them, a Cumberland Presbyterian whose wife worked for the Institute as secretary, fell very much in love with a young nurse and the two of them actually started to run away together but they returned the next day. One, a single Lutheran, told how he had been sexually abused as a child, and then admitted to several of the others that he was a homosexual. The only other regular Presbyterian was the chaplain I liked least: he was a snobby kind of fellow, and he was living with his girl friend whom he planned to marry. A young Baptist was

assigned as my room mate, and he liked to come in late and tum the bright light on in our room. I have always been sensitive to light, and cannot sleep with the lights on. This young man was from east Tennessee, and his speech was barely understandable: for example, he pronounced flower, flair, and flyer all the same way. A young Methodist seemed to be the most likeable and most responsible one of the group; he wanted to be my friend. And yet, he liked to use gutter language with his wife in my presence. I am sure that all of them thought I was too stiff and self-righteous, but I tried not to be too judgmental in dealing with them.

I had many helpful experiences while in the program, but some of the most dramatic came about when I was working the emergency room. For example, one night a young child was brought in who was dead on arrival, and his mother was there. She told me how she had left the child alone for just a minute, and then she heard the terrible sound of the screech of brakes, and she saw that the outside door was cracked. She ran to the street as fast as she could but when she got there, her boy lay bleeding on the road. She kept wringing her hands as she talked, and tears flowed continuously down her face, but otherwise, her face looked emotionless.

One memorable growing experience occurred at the Methodist hospital. I had been assigned there for a period of about two months, and I was on the oncology wing. One lady that I visited was about forty and a nurse who had been on the staff there. She was dying of some kind of internal cancer. The doctor said there was nothing further that could be done for her. She seemed to really benefit from my visits, so I tried to see her as often as possible. But one day as I was coming to her door, the head nurse of the department came out of her room and told me that the woman was not up for a visit that day. As chaplains were not always appreciated by the hospital staff, I figured that the nurse was just jealous of my being able to help her patient, so I waited until she got around the comer and went on in to see her. But from the first it was apparent that I should not have come. The patient was very ill and cross, and seemed to be almost another person. Later, I went to tell the nurse what I had done, and I apologized and told her that she had been right and I had been wrong. At the end of the period when I was evaluated by the chief chaplain, I was afraid that this would go against me on my record, but he brought it up as a special lesson for all the chaplains, and he said that what I did showed remarkable progress.

It was during my time in Memphis that I first made contact with the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. I had read about the organization a few years earlier, and had thought about attending some of their meetings in the hopes of meeting some old shipmates, or at least being able to share a few war stories with some of my contemporaries who were in the same battles that I was in. But I did not have the opportunity until the year I was in Memphis and I then read that a meeting was being held on Dec. 7. I showed up at the meeting place and met a really fine fellow named Clyde Hudson, who warmly welcomed me. It really made me feel good to be with people who shared the Pearl Harbor experience with me. The next year, I made contact with the man who had been appointed by the national organization to be chairman of the organization in Arkansas, and we agreed to have a meeting in North Little Rock to form a chapter there, and we had our first meeting in a Presbyterian Church. Later, when the national organization needed a chaplain to replace the one who died, I wrote and offered my services.

Clyde Hudson had by then been elected to a national office of District Director, and he put in a strong recommendation for me. In this way I became the National Chaplain for the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association in 1984, and have held the office since.

I had never been dissatisfied with my salary at Stuttgart; I was making more than at DeRidder, and we seemed to be getting along better. But then I ran into an old budget which showed that the church had paid the former pastor considerable more than they were paying me even though I was better educated, had more experience in the ministry, and had a larger family to support. I had never discussed salary with any pulpit nominating committee: I always said, "You know better than I do what my needs will be, and how much you can afford." I had left salary completely up to them. But my feelings were hurt to think that the Stuttgart people did me that way. My feelings came out at one of the meetings of the chaplains, and all of them got on my case for not becoming more involved in the process of determining the salary. They said that the committee had only done the natural thing: they got me as cheaply as they could. The fault was mine, not theirs. I made a resolution to try to talk to the Session about the problem when they made up the budget the next year, but it was exceedingly difficult for me. At that time there were no committees that looked after the pastor and his family, so it had to be brought up to the full Session I became so embarrassed about the whole business that I think that was one reason that I later began to start looking for another place.

About the time that I went to Memphis for the CPE training, Madge became an administrator at the local rest home. She took the state examination and became fully accredited. One day I was out to see her, and the owner was there, so she introduced him to me as Mr. Floyd Wilson. The name meant nothing to me but he said, "Richard Young, Pollock, 1939." That was exactly where I was in 1939 so I knew that he knew me, but still I did not remember him. Then he said, "You know, Blue Eyed Wilson." Then I remembered. He had been a rather close friend both in Pollock and in Nevada. He had become wealthy in the rest home business, and he tried to talk me into getting into it, but I had no stomach for it. Not only so, I had no money to invest in it anyway.

Following my training in CPE, I learned that seminaries were beginning to grant Doctor of Ministry degrees to people who were on the field and who could take time for some additional studies at the seminary. Austin Seminary had not yet begun the program, but Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary was about to start, and they said that I could get some credit toward the degree from my CPE work. That was enough to get me started, so for the next two years I would take courses at Louisville, and continue my ministry in Stuttgart. I worked out a project for the dissertation which I could do among the older people at the rest home where Madge was administrator, and so I was among the first class of ministers getting their D. Min. at Louisville in 1974. I also was able to publish my work on the dissertation in the Presbyterian Survey under the title, "Beyond 65; Not An Age For Stagnation."

I had some interesting learning experiences in the Doctor of Ministry program other than in the field of theology. For one thing, I lived in one of the dormitory rooms while on campus and I found that circumstances had really changed since I had been at Austin. The seminary then

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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Henry Pope Mobley
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Raymond V. Kearns
PRESIDENT OF THE SEMINARY

Clinton Morrison
DEAN

had college students rooming there, most of whom were black, and loud music was played all night long in the room above mine. I can still remember the words, "Get down, get down." There were many white girls that could be seen all during the night going up to the black men's rooms. One night I was using the bathroom and one came in to get some water for a coffee pot. I told her that this was a men's room, but she paid no attention to me; she continued to get her water and left without seeming to notice me. One night an older white man came calling out a female name, and I went to the door to see what was going on. He said he was looking for his daughter, and he had seen her enter this building. I said there might be some white girls upstairs, but I didn't know. I protested to the seminary officials about all this, and they sympathized, but said the seminary needed the money obtained by renting out the rooms.

I also learned something about women's liberation while I was there. There were twelve of us D. Min. candidates, all male, and one of our professors was very liberal, a reader in an Episcopal Church even though he was an ordained Presbyterian minister, and married to a very liberated woman. She was then a professor at the University of Louisville, and he told us that he wanted to bring her over to help us understand women's problems. All of us agreed, and when she came, we all rose as one man to greet her. She really laid into us for that; she said that was one device men used to keep women in their place. During her lecture time, she told us that women had been niggarized through the ages to accept certain roles. Her idea was that for the first nine months after the birth of a child, the husband should care for the child since the wife had the burden for the first nine months. She believed that marriage contracts should be for only seven years and after that the contract should be renegotiated. Half jokingly, I said that through the ages, the hand that rocked the cradle was the hand that ruled the world. I said that when labor was hard, it was to women's advantage to have the traditional role as housewife and other caring roles, and it was they and not men who had carried on this tradition. But now when all work has been modified and made easier, it is to women's advantage to break out of those roles, and that is what they are doing. She became exceedingly angry with me. I learned that for many of these women, the cause of women's rights has in fact become their religion, whatever religious faith they may claim to have.

At about that time, Rich graduated from Hampden Sydney. He took a temporary teaching situation in Stuttgart which helped him to decide to become a teacher. We felt that he was very innovative and creative in this work. For a time he considered trying for a business life, and he worked out a brochure along this line, but his education in philosophy and literature did not especially equip him for it. He tried construction work for a while after school was out, and he would come home soaked with sweat. I believe that this work, more than anything else, determined him to pursue a professional career.

By this time Jean had been in college a couple of years. We had wanted her to go to Mary Baldwin, and took her to look it over, but it did not really excite her. She opted for the University of Arkansas. When we took her there, I did not like the idea of leaving her in a strange place, but she had many other classmates already there and everything seemed to be working out OK. However, one young fellow seemed to be far too familiar; he lay around on her bed. I do not remember exactly what I did, but somehow it occurs to me that I threatened

to throw him out, or at least I told Jean that I was going to throw him out Jean told me later that she found out that I need not have worried about him; it turns out he was a homosexual.

This was the year that Sally graduated. She won top place along with Steve Wilson, one of the teacher's children. Sally also decided to go to the University of Arkansas. I believe that it was during that summer of 1975 that Jean and Sally went to work during the summer in a camp in Tuxedo, North Carolina. Our children were definitely growing up, and growing away.

A little later, I began to be interested in making a move. I felt that the work in Stuttgart was mostly at a standstill, and I felt reinvigorated by the new degree. Also, I had learned to have a real dislike for mosquitoes which seemed to dominate outside life in Stuttgart. From the standpoint of family, this seemed like a good time to move. So I paid some attention when a friend of mine, the minister in Mountainburg named Bill Vincent, told me that a church was available in VanBuren, Arkansas and he would be glad to recommend me for it. Soon we were on our way to a new and exciting ministry in the First Presbyterian Church of Van Buren.

CHAPTER XV

UNTO THE HILLS

I knew that we would like VanBuren when I first saw it. I have always loved the hills and swift flowing streams of water, and these were in abundance in that area. One of my first experiences there was when Wallace Williams, a self-styled hillbilly, took me for a fishing trip up Lee Creek. We went as far north as he could in his motor boat, and then Wallace put a sack on his back and stepped out of the boat into the clear rushing water with his shoes and clothes on, with no more concern than he would in stepping out on a sidewalk in town. Seeing no other course than to do likewise, I followed him. Upstream about fifty yards he simply sat in the water, clothes and all, and began to grope about on the sandy bottom with his hands. He was feeling for mussels. He began to bring up a few, but mostly he would throw them back in. They must come up to a certain size to please him. So I too sat down, and began to feel about. It was in this way that I learned to fish for mussels. But Wallace did not eat them; he used their shells for ash trays and he sold them along with other trinkets he made in his shop.

The house we lived in was bought for use as a manse when we came. The church had wanted me to buy my own house and they would give us a manse allowance, but I did not have any money for a down payment at the time. At the same time, the Episcopal minister who had been pastor of the Trinity Episcopalian Church had a home just across the street from his church up on the top of a high hill, and he wanted to sell it. Our church bought it for $37,000.00 and that was a real steal even for that time. Before I left about seven years later, I wanted to buy a home, and I offered them $75,000 for the house, but they were not interested. This manse had a chimney which we made much use of, a two car garage, and a beautiful view in front, the Episcopal church grounds. It was probably the loveliest place we have ever lived.

The church itself was a beautiful old structure with tall pillars in front and a dome. Inside there was seating capacity for about one hundred, but as the church had been constructed under the Akron plan, it could be expanded to seat another hundred or so. It had much room for classes, and a fellowship hall in the basement. It had a real fine pipe organ, a sizeable choir loft, and a high ceiling. Altogether it was a very attractive building.

There were two matters which I did not especially like, and I was able to solve one of them later. One was the fact that the secretary had her office in the pastor's study. This would not have been terrible since she only worked two mornings a week, but she smoked, and the whole place reeked of smoke. By this time I had definitely developed a dislike for the smell of smoke. Later I was able to have her work place moved down to a room in the basement. The other situation was a large room in the basement which had stairs leading to the outside and which was kept unlocked for use as a devotional center and prayer room. It had been set aside as a memorial to the pastor Dr. Miller who had served the church for almost fifty years. Even though it had fine furniture in it, it was never used by any member of the church, and the only use that it seemed to have at all was from lovers who would meet there, and leave unwanted evidence of their activities. I was unable to have it closed down, but I understand that the

present pastor has succeeded where I failed.

I remember the fIrst sermon I preached in Van Buren:"I Will Lift Up My Eyes." We had been in flat places so long, and I had always loved the hills. It seemed at last that we were in an environment we could really appreciate. Besides, we were near a larger city, Fort Smith, and had all the privileges of small town living as well as the convenience of a city. We loved Van Buren as long as we were there, and would not have left except that at the end, I felt we needed to have a position where we could save a little money for a home after retirement. This we had never been able to do in any of the churches we had served.

At work, my usual routine was to begin my sermon early on Monday morning while I was usually in a creative mood, and sometimes I would have the basic idea for a sermon and even perhaps the outline before the morning was over. I would usually have fInished my sermon by Thursday. Mternoons, I would spend visiting with parishioners or with the sick. Every morning, I would walk down past the old Bob Bums home near the church, then past the old blacksmith shop where Junior Jones would be smithing, and thence to the post office. I would usually stop to talk to Junior, but I have to admit that his language was pretty rich. When he would strike hot iron with his hammer, and some sparks hit his skin, he would let out a bellow, and a few choice curse words. I sure hated it when he had to close his shop and went into the welding business.

One of the most peculiar characters I ever met was in VanBuren; he was the Clerk of the Session and his name was Cap Bedell. Cap had a deep sense of responsibility. When he attended Presbytery, he would act as though every decision was of absolute importance. At Rotary, when he was asked to pray, there would always ensue a long silence, and one could almost feel the majesty of his God before he ever said a word. He was one of the most sincere and dedicated people that I have known. He was very exact and very exacting. His job before retirement had been that of City Engineer, and I was told that he once had several blocks of cement tom up and removed when it was discovered that they were one inch off specification. He was the same way with the Session Minute Book, and with any other job he did for the church. But sometimes he let his feeling of responsibility take him too far. Once during the meeting of the congregation, he started taking over the job of moderator, which in our system the minister is supposed to do. I had to call him down. I believe that really hurt him, for which I was sorry. At the time of his death his son told me a story about him that might account for his rather eccentric character, or at least partially explain it. He said that his dad was a drop out from high school and was hoeing cotton in one of the large fields near Stamps, Arkansas when it occurred to him that he did not wish to be a common laborer all his life. He made a resolution to go back to school even though he would be older than the other students, then go on to college and make something of himself. So he hoed on out to the end of the row, and then he started his new life. The remarkable thing to his son was this: He hoed on out to the end of the row he was on before he made the change. The City of VanBuren recognized the contribution of Cap to the community a year or so after his death: they named the newly constructed city lake Cap Bedell in his honor.

Probably my closest friend in VanBuren was Wallace Williams, the self styled poet and hillbilly. He loved to write poems, and I encouraged him in this, but I never thought they were of exceptionally high quality. He believed that he had to put in some raunchy language to make it attractive, but in my opinion, this did nothing but make it awkward and boorish. He did carpentry work in his little shop behind his house, and he liked for me to come over to help him. He sold trinkets that he made in quantity to such places as TO & Y. He had some rather rough ways: he once threatened to shoot a person who had offended me. He had a fine peach orchard on an half-acre behind his house, and the birds gave him a rough time, so he put some fish hooks on a line and snagged some of them. His neighbor heard the birds squawking, and turned him in to the law. As a result, he cut down every one of his beautiful and productive trees. All in all, he was a good friend, and one of the few people that I try to see when we go back that way.

One young elder at the church really impressed me with his expansive character. His name was John Northrup and he had grown up in New York where he had been one of the chief leaders in Presbyterian youth. He had lived with his wife for some years in Hawaii where he said that he once had held a high paying executive job. He and his wife Earlene had two beautiful children. John was legally blind but was able to do some carpentry work, and they lived in a nice home with a swimming pooL Earlene was much overweight, and loved to wear the Hawaiian style loose fitting gowns to hide her figure. On Sunday mornings John would greet everybody with a big smile, and if anyone asked how he was doing, he would say, "Fantastic." But one day in visiting in their home I found out that everything was not fantastic. John was drunk, and I have seldom heard such abusive language as he used on his wife and children. Later he asked me for a paid job with the church; his idea was to take charge of our youth group which then numbered about twelve, and he would have them meet at his home on Sunday evenings for swimming. When I demurred, he became angry with me, and while sober, used some very abusive language on me. Later he wrote a letter to me in which he again used strong language to condemn my leadership. He and his family completely quit the church, but I tried to maintain a relationship with them. A year or so later Earlene was put in the hospital with cancer, and I visited her. She was by now exceedingly thin, and she told me that she would like it so much if John would come see her, but that he had never come since she was ill. I went around to see him, and he was rather cooL He said he did not go see her because he had no transportation. I offered to take him, and on the way over, he told me that he no longer loved her, and did not really want to see her; he hated to be tied to a woman in her condition. He was cool to her when we saw her, and she died soon after. Oh what sadness dwells in the human heart.

I felt that I failed miserably as a minister to John and his family, and also failed in my ministry to a member named Don Williams and his wife Eula. Eula and her brother James Harshburger had grown up in the church, and James lived in town. He had married a full-blooded Cherokee, and she asked me for Christian baptism, and I agreed. She asked me if she could continue to dance, and assuming that she meant ballroom dancing, I said it would be no problem. However, she invited Madge and me to one of her dances one night way out in the woods of east Oklahoma, and it turned out to be a tribal Indian dance around a huge blazing fire. *Mter* that, I was not sure but that I gave approval too quickly. The sister Eula and Don had

lived most of their life in Memphis where he held a good job with the government, and they returned to the neighboring Almyra to live, but came to our church. Don became very friendly with me, and once told me he had inherited a lot of money, and really wanted to put it to use in a good way. He supported the church rather generously with his contributions, and he gave several pieces of office furniture to the church which he told me were personal gifts to me. I knew that with just a small amount of seed money, one could start a convalescent home, and I suggested this as a possibility and it seemed for a while that we were really going to do something big. But about that time Don began to have trouble with Eula's brother James, and he wanted me to take his part. I refused, Don became angry, and he and Eula quit coming to church. I went to see them, and made a genuine effort to work things out, and it seemed that I was making some headway. But one day after that Don came to my office really angry for no apparent cause: He called me a SOB and challenged me to a fist fight. Of course I refused to fight him. This was the one and only time that such a thing had ever happened to me, and it completely changed my attitude toward Don: I never again made an attempt to win them back. Later when Eula died, Don called me to officiate at her funeral, which I did. He offered me a $50.00 honorarium which I accepted, endorsed, and gave to the church. On leaving VanBuren, I also left the furniture he had donated. Somehow I felt there was something sinister and evil about Don.

Some people in VanBuren seemed to be almost the opposite in character to Don Williams. There was for example Eck Rowland. Eck taught the adult Sunday School class, and he always opened his session with the reading of a Psalm. He had been a football player at the University of Arkansas, and he loved football, but he was a genuinely humble man. If anyone made sport of him because of his sometimes bungling ways, he would join in laughing at himself.

It was about midway during my ministry in VanBuren that we decided to sell the land we owned near DeRidder. I sure hated to part with that land because it was one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. In many ways it fitted perfectly a dream of mine to own an isolated place of such beauty. But the reality was that it was most unlikely that I would ever be able to live there. It was far too back in the woods for Madge and me to build a home on it, and it was too distant for me to even visit. So when I got a good price from the land company, I sold it. I still feel guilty for selling it to them because their intention was to tum the beautiful forest into a tree farm for pine trees.

But what to do with the money from the land? I had always realized a good profit when I had dealt in land, and also it occurred to me that Madge and I might like to build a home on one of the large hills in VanBuren. I asked Eck Rowland if he would sell a few acres of his land to me, and he offered me seven acres in exchange for the money I got from the land in DeRidder. I felt that six acres would be enough for that price, and that is what we agreed upon. The place that Eck sold to me in Van Buren afforded Greg and me the opportunity to do many things together, but mostly we cleared out underbrush and tried to improve the beauty of the land. One thing we did was to build a fence, and I did not know how much that meant to Greg until a few years later. When he was at West Point, he wrote the following poem on my

birthday which he called, "The Fence:"

"Alone on a wind swept hill
With a warm, hazy spring sky above
We rolled the barbed wire off its spool
In a straight line, to where the posts ended.
We were a little worn down
From digging in the rocky soil
And the wire was easy to put up.
I walked down the hill to pull the wire taut
While you slowly worked your way from one post
Then to another
To nail the wire down.
My jeans were wet from the dew of the morning
And the leaves still had water on them.
A humid breeze rolled across the hill
And I wished I could be doing something else.

I think the fence will be there for a long time
Because we put it up together.
It's straight and it's strong.
I wish I could be putting up a fence with you."

One person I visited frequently was an older man named Bill Spradley. He told me he had been a bull wrestler and a bootlegger when he was younger He also had been a gambler, and he said that he had two bags of silver dollars that he had won in Las Vegas deposited in one of the local banks. About that time the Hunt brothers in Dallas were trying to comer the market in silver, and silver was going sky-high. I told Mr. Spradley that he had better get that silver out of the bank before they sold it and gave him only the dollar amount. He took my advice and got it all out. He had 1100 dollars which he converted at an exchange of about $22.00 each.

Mr. Spradley had a friend named Reggie who visited him frequently while I was there, and the two of them were old fishing buddies, but of course due to their advanced age, they had not been fishing for years. One time while Reggie was there, Mr. Spradley was telling me a story about hooking a real big catfish and he was explaining how Reggie was at the bow of the boat, and he was supposed to get the fish in his net. The more Mr. Spradley told of the story, the angrier he got, because Reggie had let the fish escape. Meanwhile, Reggie was trying to defend himself and make excuses. Finally, Mr. Spradley's rage burst out in the open and he called Reggie some choice names. I thought that would be the end of their relationship, but the next time I went to visit Mr. Spradley, Reggie was there.

Mr. Spradley owned a water company that supplied water to the north part of town where my land was located. He told me that he would give me a real good price to pipe water to my place, only about $1,100.00. I suppose we could have raised the money for this if we had really tried, but I saw no hurry as we were not considering building there at that time, and perhaps not

at all. Meantime, Mr. Spradley became ill and died, and his wife sold the water company to an out of state group. Later I found out just how important having water there was: the land was devalued at least 50% because of the difficulty in getting water.

I had many good experiences with ministers of other faiths in VanBuren. One year on Good Friday we planned an event that would involve the whole town. We changed up the "Stations of the Cross" liturgy a bit so that all churches could participate, and we constructed a large cross that required several men to carry. We began at the Methodist Church near the Arkansas river, and carried that cross to each of the stations until we reached the top of the highest hill where we had our final station. We asked each of the participating churches, thirteen in all, to be a station along the way and to make up large posters depicting the scene assigned to them. As the crowd reached each station, that church was to lead in the liturgy and singing, and they could have us sing songs of their choice. This all worked out really well, but we did have some interesting variations at the various stations. The Baptist minister and his church participated, but he failed to show up on that day and very few of his people were there. I had to lead the Baptist station. The holiness churches really turned out, but their songs about the blood of Jesus were about the goriest I had ever heard. At the black church, they sang so slow that it was almost impossible to stay in sync with them. But most peculiar of all was the Catholic Church. Father John Chopesky had told me that they knew "The Old Rugged Cross," so we decided to sing that song at their station. But when they started leading us in that song, it was obvious they didn't know it. I have never enjoyed services more than I did these, and I will always remember three or four hundred people, most of them teenagers, trudging along through the streets of Van Buren and up the high hill north of town, carrying that cross from station to station.

In 1978 and 1979, snow fell very heavy over most of the United States and much more than normal in our area. Several times the snow was on the ground for three or four weeks before it melted, and one time it was several inches deep for well over a month. Thanksgiving came during the heavy snow time in 1977, and the road to Fayetteville was nearly impassable. But Sally and Jean were at the university and they wanted to come home, so Greg and I started out. When we came to the mountainous road, Hwy. 71, we saw no tracks at all nor any cars going anywhere. We went north toward Mountainburg a few miles but the road got slippery, so we decided to go back. Mter we had maneuvered a tum-around which in itself was very difficult, a large truck passed us going north, so we turned around again and followed it. Half way up the big mountain north of Mountainburg was a large group of cars and trucks all stalled; a huge truck had jack-knifed across the road. After about three hours we got going again. Many times on that trip both Greg and I wished we were back safe in Van Buren.

During these cold times, we had several other dramatic experiences. One was the time that I performed the wedding for Pat Hays' son Wally about 7 pm, and after the wedding that night, we simply could not make it up log town hill because of the ice. We would get on the flat stretch at the bottom of the hill near the Presbyterian Church and we would go as fast as we could but when we turned up the hill, we would quickly come to a stop. Finally, I turned around and went over to the interstate and by taking a circuitous route, we made it. Another time, I was

with the funeral hearse going up a high hill to the cemetery, and the hearse began to slide about and finally stopped. I got out and helped them push the hearse, but finally we had to take the coffin ourselves. It was also during this time that Madge and I were going down an icy road about twenty miles an hour and we began to skid and turned all the way round and landed in a ditch. Madge called out, "Lord Jesus, help us." We landed in snow, and when a couple of people stopped to help, we pushed the car out and continued on our journey, none the worse for the accident. Madge was satisfied that her prayer was answered, but still she wanted to prevail upon me that we ought to drivell slower in the ice.

It was during this time that I decided to make our house energy efficient. We were an all-electric home, and the energy bill was taking a serious toll in our pocket book. So I rigged up a heater that I could regulate by adjusting its flue, and I led the smoke stack out through the chimney. I purchased real good seasoned oak that would bum all through the night for less than $ 20 per half cord (4 by 8, 2 feet in length). We cut our bill to a fraction of its former cost. But to do so, we had to contend with the smelly wood burner, and our house was a lot less cheery than it had been.

I was president of the Ministerial Alliance on two different occasions, and much of the work I helped the group get involved in was giving food to the poor, or otherwise helping the poor of the city and county. The Episcopal minister, Reese Hutchinson, was also interested in this work and we made quite a team: we got to be known as the people in town to go to if one was in need. This was carried to the extreme: one Sunday afternoon a woman called me who had seen a family stranded under the bridge at the Interstate Highway, and she called me to go out there and help them. By this time I was getting tired of everybody dumping this work on Reese and me, so I asked her if she was a Christian. When she said yes, I asked her why she didn't help them. She said very snootily: "Well," and hung up. I went on out to help them.

My favorite recreation during the years at Van Buren was golf, and I had some very good friends who were also reliable golf partners. Among these were Bill Vincent, a retired military chaplain and stated supply minister at Mountainburg; Ray Moore, the minister at the Wood Memorial Christian Church; Palmer Deloteus, a retired Presbyterian minister living in Fort Smith; and for a while, Jim Paton, a Scot who came to live in Van Buren and attended our church. Bill Vincent died before I left Van Buren, and soon after I left Van Buren, Ray Moore and Jim Paton died. I called Palmer Deloteus a few years ago, and he said he no longer is able to play golf. So time takes it toll.

I am happy to say that I did make a hole-in-one during the time we played together. It was on a par three hole and the fairway had been shortened due to work on the tee, and I used a seven iron to hit the ball about ninety yards (Now, as I have improved a little, I usually use a sand wedge for that distance.) I usually missed that hole a considerable distance on the right, and on that day I didn't even see where the ball went. I assumed that I really had knocked it off course. We all looked for the ball a good while, and finally gave up. When we went up the steep hill to the green we saw the ball in the hole laying up against the flag stick. I carefully pulled the stick out, and the ball fell back in. A hole in one, and I had thought I had missed the

whole fairway!

During the time at VanBuren I became very much involved with Presbytery work. For several years I had been on the Church Development Committee and was finally made chairman. In that capacity I helped determine which churches should receive Presbytery aid, and how much. We also had the responsibility to close dead or dying churches, and to organize new ones. I feel that I really let an opportunity slip right through my fingers at that time. We had some valuable property in Fayetteville which had been bought for development which was later abandoned, so we sold the property for a handsome price. About that time, we heard that many Presbyterians in Bella Vista, a swanky retirement center north of Fayetteville, wanted a Presbyterian church. When we investigated, we learned that the developer would give us the land. I made a personal survey by letter and received more than six hundred replies, and about two hundred people said they would join the Presbyterian Church if we built one. I made an effort to get one built, but somehow I did not get the backing I needed, so the opportunity slipped away. I have always felt that if I had pushed hard enough, and had done my homework well enough, I would have been able to motivate the Presbytery to undertake this work. Many years later, one was built and I understand it is doing quite well.

Much of my work in Van Buren centered on Koinonia Groups. I had learned much earlier that many people outside the church family were looking for opportunities to meet with others with interests similar to theirs, and study some of the deeper thoughts of the Bible, especially as it applied to their life. At Van Buren, I found that many people inside the church, especially those who did not grow up in that area and did not feel a part of the in-group, had similar needs. But often there were people that had been in that congregation all their lives who were also looking for something like this. I would get together groups of about 16 people with these needs and we would meet in their homes to study something like "Edge of Adventure," or "Living the Adventure" by Keith Miller and Bruce Larson, and then we would have about an hour's fellowship following. I found these meetings very successful, and life-long friendships were formed in this way.

For a time, the church seemed to be growing, and I believed that we needed a new fellowship hall with class rooms. We were then using the basement for fellowship: its ceiling was very low, and the whole place was very incommodious. Class rooms were unattractive and small. Several of the elders agreed that something needed to be done. Paul Wayne Hurst came up with an idea of expanding the present church structure, but many were opposed to that because we could no longer find the same style brick as the present building. Dow Manuel wanted to build some shack like buildings around the outside periphery of our grounds and use them for class rooms. Finally, the Neals (Andy and Jay, his uncle, were elders) came up with the idea of an affordable building that would be built alongside the present structure, and that is what we did. Wallace Williams constructed a huge wooden Celtic Cross to be hung on the end of the building and he placed it there himself. I thought this whole affair was a tremendous success.

Another work I did was visit older people on a regular basis and take communion to those

who couldn't come. One year Eck Rowland and I decided to paint one of our older member's two-storied house, as it had not been painted for several years and she was too poor to have it done. Painting that house required that we build high scaffolds and put high ladders on them to reach the apex of the building which was about thirty five or forty feet high. One day I was out on one of the high ladders with my feet on the next to the highest rung, and I was hanging on to a protruding nail to help keep balance, when the owner came out to watch. Later that day the older women of the church were having a meting at Mrs. Stephenson's house, and her house also needed painting. The owner of the house we were painting told all the other ladies that Dr. Young was risking his life for her. This made the others jealous, and Mrs. Stephenson said, "My house needs painting, and he has not offered to paint IT." I found out then as I have on other occasions that good works are not universally appreciated.

Another activity that I engaged in was part-time teaching at Westark Community College. I really enjoyed teaching math to college students, but again I became acquainted with changes taking place. We had one student, a Taiwanese, who did not like my teaching, and would often bring a funny book to class to read. I threatened to have him removed from class if he did not discontinue that practice, so he stopped doing it. But at the time of examination, he turned in an almost perfect paper. I noticed that his errors were exactly those of another student that sat near him, and made in exactly the same way. I decided that this could not be a coincidence; he must be cheating. So I called him on the carpet for it. But he took the matter to the dean, and she called me on the carpet for offending him. I told her that I did not have to teach, and I offered to resign, but she backed down a little so I finished the semester out. Later Dow Manuel, one of our elders, decided he wanted to take advantage of some GI educational money that was available to him, so he enrolled for a math course at Westark and he asked me to help him out so he could pass. When Dow showed me what he was doing, it was simple arithmetic. My opinion of We stark, which was not all that high at the beginning, plunged to the bottom after those kinds of experiences. Nevertheless, all of the math teachers I knew were fine people.

During much of the time Madge and I were in Van Buren, our three older children were at the University of Arkansas. Richie had gotten a teacher's certificate at Conway, but after a brief stint of teaching in a backwater town with 85% black students, he pretty much came to the conclusion that he did not wish to pursue that career The trouble was not racism; the fact is that most black students had been passed on to higher grades without being required to learn, and many in the higher grades could not even read or write. Richie decided to go to the university for further studies in art, but then switched to English and got a Master's Degree. Before we left Van Buren he had transferred to Carnegie Mellon to work for a Ph. D. in rhetoric.

Jean had decided to become a dietician, so she majored in biology and related subjects. We were never able to help our children as much as we would have liked, and looking back, I am sure they thought we were extremely close with our money. One day I went to see Jean to talk about planning a budget, and she got so exasperated with me and the whole business, that she almost quit talking to me about it. She came home after graduation to work at Sparks Medical Center in the food department on an interim basis until she was accepted in a school of nutrition, and she hated the job. When she heard from the University of Virginia that she was

accepted there as an intern, she and her mother danced a jig. Despite the danger, she was so anxious to get on with her life that she left in the cold of winter in her little Maverick ford while snow lay heavy on the ground. The long river bridge at Memphis was completely iced over, and how she made it through there, I'll never know.

Sally had done well in her major of Spanish in college, and she decided to pursue a career in teaching languages. In order to advance in this career, she enrolled in a Master's program in French at the University of Texas and she lived in housing at Austin Seminary, which is adjacent to the university campus. Sally met many young theologs while there, and fell for one from Germany, so after she obtained her Master's Degree, she decided to go over to Germany to study there, and get to know her friend's family. We were absolutely afraid that we were losing Sally entirely, and we were so relieved when she and her friend broke their relationship and she returned to the states. But this experience proved highly beneficial to her. She learned to speak German fluently, and when she returned she earned sufficient credits in that language to teach it, and is now qualified to teach three foreign languages in high schools.

Greg was always a good student, and one of his main interests was the band. Under Mr. Brammer's leadership, the band got to go many places and won many competitive events. Greg learned self-discipline as well as the meaning of hard work in the band. I believe that this experience went a long way in preparing him for West Point when he received an appointment there. But Greg never lacked for the kind of courage his career would require. In Junior High there were some tough looking cowboys who liked to stand around and look important; they wore cowboy hats and boots and probably fancied themselves to be very tough. One day as Greg was passing some of these boys, one of them reached up and knocked Greg's glasses to the ground. Greg picked them up, and then without saying anything, reached up and tilted the boy's hat over and it fell to the ground. This was pure sacrilege. The boy fussed and fumed and threatened, but Greg told him he was ready for him, and the boy never hit a lick.

Before graduation, Greg decided to try for Princeton, West Point and Davidson. He was declined at Princeton, and accepted at Davidson. As for West Point, Greg seemed to have a good chance there because of his grades and extra-curricular activities, but to get the final appointment, he needed to get toughened up some, and also had to go for many physical examinations because of a minor heart irregularity. During this time, some of the people in Van Buren scoffed at the idea that Greg could make West Point; after all, he was not a football hunk which was all the rage at the time. But Greg did have the ability and the determination, and before school was out, he got two long distance calls while at school, one from Senator Bumpers and the other from Representative Hammerschmidt, telling him of his appointment. Not only were his full four years of college provided for, he would be paid a handsome stipend on top of that.

Madge and I had several new and exciting experiences together before we left VanBuren. One was the visits we made to see Greg at West Point. Another was the visit to the west coast where we worshiped in the Glass Cathedral. We had gone there for some evangelistic training under Robert Schuler, but on our third day there we received word that a member of one of our most prominent families in the church named Pat Hays had died, and I decided to return to have

the funeral. But in Los Angeles we had contacted an old friend from Stuttgart, the Rev. Tom Peake, and he and his wife had shown us around town. Even though truncated, it was a wonderful trip.

There were times of joy and times of sorrow, often tied closely together. For example, Jean decided to get married while we were still there, and we had a beautiful church wedding for her. The choir sang, "All Things Bright and Beautiful," and many of Jean's old friends from Stuttgart and the university were there. Also we got to meet the Kilbys, and they seemed to be mighty fine folks. But just before the ceremony, I got word that Mama had died. I did not even tell Jean because I did not want to mar the joyful time they were having, but right after the wedding, we went to Forest Hill. On the way home late that night, in a town named Elizabethtown, La. , a cop stopped us, and I argued that I was not speeding since I had allowed the car to start slowing down when I saw the first sign. It was a mistake to argue; he took my driver's license, and I had to stop on my way back through and pay a pretty good fine.

Mter all the children were gone, I began again to feel rather isolated and out of place. Madge and I would often sit on the front porch glider and look over the beautiful hills, and wonder just what we wanted to do. It was about this time that Madge was to be gone for a few days (I forget why) and I was alone for Sunday dinner. As usual, I went to Wyatt's Cafeteria, and on that day, the Tates from our church, who I considered our very close friends, were only a few people ahead of me in the line, and they talked to me before going to their table. I was in hopes they would invite me to sit with them since I do not like to eat alone, but they did not. Later on my way out I saw Jim Harshburger and his wife, and went by to speak with them. They were very apologetic about not inviting me to eat with them; they had not seen me. This experience with the Tates went far to convince me that we had not developed many real close friends there.

I also began to realize that Madge and I would soon need to have a home of our own when we retired, so I talked to some of the elders in our church about the possibility of our buying the manse. I knew that they had not wanted the church to buy it to begin with, so I thought there was a chance they might sell it, and I was willing to give them a good deal more than they paid for it. But each one I talked to said that they would personally agree to sell it to me, but they were afraid there were others who would oppose. I saw this was not going to be the solution, so I thought about building a house on our land. But about that time I saw an advertisement in the Presbyterian Outlook for an associate minister at the Harvey Browne Church in Louisville. That was the church I attended when I was working for a D. Min. and I had been impressed with its program, so I decided to answer the ad just to see if I would be considered. In addition to the motive of wishing to get out of the doldrums, I knew that the salary would be much better than our church could afford, and this would strengthen our financial ability to buy a home.

The Harvey Browne Church responded favorably to my application, and they decided to send two of the members of the Pulpit Committee, Jane Broeker and Carol Scholla to interview Madge and me, and to hear me preach. They came on Saturday, and we took them for a ride

around the area, and showed them Judge Parker's execution scaffold with twelve hangmen's nooses so they could hang twelve at a time. Madge treated them to some of her specialty, an apple pie that no one could ever match. I do not believe that my sermon the next day was what made them decide for us; I do believe it was the apple pie. At any rate, in the fall of 1982 we were invited to Louisville with all expenses paid to look over the church and meet the full committee. As a result, I was called to be the Associate Pastor of Congregational Care.

We went on from there to see Richie in Pittsburgh, and while we were there, we received a strange call from Neil Weatherhogg, the senior pastor. He said that the church also needed a minister on staff for Christian education, and they were considering a woman for the job who had applied for the job that was being given to me. Neil said that they would not take her if I was opposed, but I did not see how I could stand in the way of a person getting a job especially since I did not even know her. He wanted to know if I had any objections. I could see trouble on the horizon from this, and I almost backed out of going, which I probably should have done. But I did decide to take the work, and despite many difficulties I encountered there, I believe that on the whole it was a rewarding and growing experience for me.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAST CALL

The church in Louisville was not exactly the last church to which I was called, because I later served at the Milton, WV Presbyterian Church, the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Lafayette, LA., and the Amite-Arcola Presbyterian Church in Amite, LA. But Harvey Browne Presbyterian Church was the last church I served on a regular basis before retirement.

Before we moved to Louisville, the church paid our expenses to come up and look for a house to live in. Not only that, the church promised us if we bought a house, they would pay the necessary points (the system of paying points was used as a way of prepaying interest so that interest would not be so high on the regular monthly payments) We found a beautiful house on Rudy Lane that had an overhanging roof and exterior walls that looked like they had been wainscoted with the lower half being brick and the upper half being wood. Adding to the beauty of the architecture was the beauty of the land and the landscaping. The only problem was that the lot had thirty seven trees on it, and when time came for raking or cleaning gutters, there was an overload of work. This home was within a mile of Harvey Browne, and it was one of the most comfortable homes in which we have lived.

The whole ambience of the church was so different from any of my previous churches that it almost seemed I was in another kind of work. Whereas I had always been the solo pastor with perhaps part time secretarial and janitorial help, at Harvey Browne there were three to four ministers on the staff, three people in the musical department, a Director of Christian Education, two or three part time seminary students, several full time secretaries and a building superintendent in charge of all the janitorial service and yard work. Whereas my car had usually been the only one to occupy the car lot at previous churches, at Harvey Browne there were always hundreds of cars in the lot because of the various activities that were always going on. Almost every day the senior citizens met for various activities; boy scouts had meetings; Chinese cultural groups had meetings; and the list went on and on. Also, many Harvey Browne volunteers were always there. It was very much like having a small town right there in the church.

My work was also considerably different than it formerly had been. Whereas I had been responsible for just about every thing that went on in the church, now I was responsible for only a small area, and even there, I was not entirely independent of others. The staff met every Monday morning for about four hours, and I never did like to attend those meetings nor did I ever feel that I made much of a contribution. Most of the work there involved scheduling, and as I was not directly responsible for much programmatic work, I never had much to schedule. If there was to be work assigned that I might be interested in, I would like to have time to think it over before I made a commitment, but that is not the way the staff worked. Neil Weatherhogg would usually read out something that was coming up and asked who would like to be responsible. While I would be thinking it over, Lynn Gant would volunteer for it. Mostly it turned out that I was assigned only those things I initiated.

The most exciting part of my work was my preaching assignments. I got to preach in the main service about six or eight times a year, and I was supposed to have all the chapel assignments according to the job description I was given. However, it soon became obvious that Neil wanted to make assignments for the chapel as he did for other jobs, and I showed him the original job description. Neil also felt that all pastors on staff ought to be involved in hospital visitation, so he made assignments for that job. The hardest part about this work was the feeling that one must always be alert and on guard to protect one's turf, or to get a choice assignment.

Another part of my work that I enjoyed, and where I faced no competition, was in my program of visitation. I took communion to all the shut-ins monthly, and I tried to visit all inactives and others who I felt might need visitation. I would often get an elder to go visiting with me, and I would always have an elder with me when I served communion.

A good deal of my work was done through Session committees. Each Session committee was assigned a staff person to meet with them, and I had congregational care and new members.The committee would meet monthly, and look at what we had done as well as make plans for the future. Mostly the work of the committee would not need approval of the Session, but occasionally something new would come up that would need Session approval. The committees were of great help in carrying out programs, and in getting the church involved through reporting to the Session, but they did not offer much real help in planning. Very few committee members had vision of things as they could be or were willing to take risks. Of course, there would always be some on the committees who were visionaries, but nearly always there would be others who would try to stop any new project.

As Congregational Care Minister, I was also in charge of the parish minister program. To carry this out, I had the congregation divided into about 30 areas that varied in size according to density of Presbyterians in the areas, and I enlisted two parish ministers for each area. I set up a training program for the ministers, and made up a guideline of the work that was expected of them. All parish ministers would meet together on a regular basis to discuss problems, successes, etc. This was a fairly successful program for awhile, but after a couple of years it began to wane.

I was in charge of the new member program, but I admit that I never did get this program going too well. Most of it I did myself by simply visiting people who had visited the church. I was in charge of giving several training sessions to all adult new members, and in the sessions I often made use of Dr. Clint Morrison from the seminary, and others from our staff. The only program for new members set up before I came was that periodically the new member committee would take all members who had recently joined out to lunch. We continued that program but I never did see that it did a lot of good. During my time at the church our number of new members just about equaled our losses.

One work that Madge and I did together was with koinonia groups. We initiated several of these groups, and felt that all the work we did in that way helped the individuals who participated in them, and was to the benefit of the church. As before, we noticed that many of

the leaders chosen for the Session came from those koinonia groups.

Madge enjoyed attending the Round Table Class which was composed of older members, a goodly number of which were widows. It was a very lively class, and probably the thinking of the people in the class more nearly matched our conservative thinking than any other group in the church, but it was by no means a conservative group. Their teacher, Ken Bott, was a pacifist, and all them related well to the thinking of Neil Weatherhogg who was far more liberal than I. However, in some ways they were too conservative for my taste. For example, they liked to sing a song or two at every meeting, and that was fine with me, but they did not like our regular Presbyterian hymnbooks; they had a real old book they sang out of. They asked Madge to teach for them during a period of time when their teacher was ill, and she really enjoyed that experience. She made many good friends in that class, and so did I.

There were very few members that I did not relate well to, but there was at least one person who seemed to think I was a sexist because I did not go in too heavily for politically correct language. She really told me off one day when I said something about wanting to use some of the ladies of the church to help me in visitation. That was probably a poor use of the word "use" but I did not feel it warranted her offense, nor her abusive language to me. However, that was the only such episode of that kind, so perhaps I got off light.

Harvey Browne held a retreat in an Indiana state park about fifty miles north of Louisville one year, and I felt more a part of the staff and better about my participation in that retreat than I ever did at any other activity. I was involved in the planning from its beginning as I had suggested it as a matter of congregational care, and the speaker I suggested was chosen. He proved to relate really well with the participants. Also, much of our activity was outdoors, and I have always loved the outdoors. I felt much more a part of what was going on: Neil even told a joke at my expense. I mention this because the times when I felt so much a part of the Harvey Browne ministry were very rare.

Later, Madge and I took Richie up to the park, and on the return home we had a very traumatic experience. That part of Indiana had hills that were very sharp but not very high, something like the ripples on a rub-board. Coming out of one the towns, we began to encounter motor bikes coming toward us, spaced apart about one half mile. Then just as we went over the top of a hill we saw two motor bikes on the ground at the bottom of the hill ahead of us, and the riders were lying motionless. We stopped immediately, and Richie ran back to the top of the hill we had just passed over so that he could stop the traffic to keep us from being hit. Madge began to try to help one of the men, and I tried to help the other. The one she was helping had a leg that was bleeding, and jerking, but he was unconscious. The one I tried to help had blood coming out of his mouth. We did not try to move them, but only to make them comfortable. The sun was blazing hot, so I pulled off my shirt and held it over my person's head, but that was about all I could see to do. Very soon another motor bike came along, and we sent him back to a nearby farmhouse to call an ambulance. Soon forty or fifty bikers had gathered, and it was not more than ten minutes until the ambulance came. They put a plastic bag over the one Madge was watching and filled it with air. This was done to stop the bleeding. They simply put mine

on the ambulance, and we learned later that he died on the way to the hospital.

I learned something about bikers that day. I had known that they were a rather close fellowship, but I never realized how close they were. Some of the toughest looking bikers were actually crying over their injured friends, and some of them were praying. This was quite another side to the character of bikers than I was accustomed to hearing.

A delightful event happened in our family on June 2, 1984; our first grandchild was born. We were not able to be there for the birth, but we were there for the baptism, and I was invited to take part. This was of course the first baptism of family that I was involved in, and it was very significant to me. Christie was such a beautiful child, and from the earliest days she showed precocity.

It was while we were in Louisville that I was appointed National Chaplain of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. I heard that the previous National Chaplain, a Catholic priest, had died and I wrote to the president of our organization and told him that if I could be of any assistance to the organization, I would be glad to do what I could. It was not long after that until he met with the executive board. Clyde Hudson of Memphis, whom I had previously met when I was a chaplain in Memphis, was one of the District Directors on the board. He spoke up and said he knew me, and he highly recommended me for the position. In only a few weeks I was named National Chaplain, and asked to attend the December 1984 National Convention at Grossingers in New York.

The experience in New York was one of my mountain top experiences. Madge and I were both invited, and our expenses while there were paid by the association. Grossingers was a rather fancy Jewish resort, and there were many pictures on the walls of famous people that had been there, such as Jack Benny, Bob Bums, Gracie Allen, and many others. At that time of the year it was bitter cold, but Grosingers was like an enclosed city; we could stay inside and go shopping, or eat, or sleep, or even go sight-seeing.

What made the 1984 convention so grand was the grand way we were treated, and also my participation in the ceremonies we held at West Point. The organization had printed a very laudatory article in the program book, introducing me as the new national chaplain, and everywhere, I was treated with great respect. We made the trip down to West Point by bus, and I gave a brief speech to a crowd of about fifteen hundred in the chapel, and I had a major part in the memorial service .. Greg was there, as was also his commanding officer, the superintendent of West Point, who gave the main speech. On the last evening back at Grossingers, we had our huge banquet, with about seven hundred members in attendance. Madge and I went to sit in the general audience, and suddenly we heard our names being called over the loudspeaker. They wanted us to come sit at the head table. The manager of Grossingers sat next to me, and he insisted on treating me to a specialty kosher wine. This was a great experience.

We found out at Grossingers that many of the Jewish customs and food laws that we read in the Old Testament are still alive in their religion. For example, they never did serve us ham

or pork at the resort: all food must be kosher. Then on Friday, we were informed there would be no hot meal that evening, nor any breakfast the next morning other than a continental breakfast we could fix for ourselves. They were observing the Sabbath. We were going to West Point that day, so lunch boxes had been prepared in advance for our trip. Although I do not agree with the Jewish faith in this, it made me feel good to know that some of the leaders in the Jewish community still had the integrity to hold their commitment in matters which varied so greatly from the American culture.

I believe that it was at Christmas time of that same year that we had a peculiar experience when we went to meet Greg at the airport. When his plane began to unload, one of the first people off the plane was Mohammed Ali, the great boxer, and he had a large group of people with him. It was a rather large plane, so after about a hundred or so more people got off, Governor Brown of Kentucky got off. Finally Greg got off. While we were waiting at the baggage department, Mohammed Ali stood near us, but we did not see Governor Brown at that time. Later, when we got Greg's baggage and started to leave, we found ourselves walking out with Governor Brown. I said to him, "Governor Brown, did you see Mohammed Ali?" He said, "What, was he on the plane?"' I said, "Yes, and he is still back there getting his baggage." Immediately without a word, Governor Brown turned around and began almost to run back toward the baggage department. Such is the way of politicians.

I do not have a good memory as to how things happened in sequence during those years at Harvey Browne, but I believe it must have been about a year prior to this time that Sally came back from Germany. We had definitely not wanted her to go: during her days at the University of Texas she had met a German theological student while she was living at Austin Seminary, and she wanted to go to Germany and live with his family for a time. Madge and I found that we could not argue her out of it, so we helped her with the trip. I told her that if ever she needed money to come back, just let us know. It looked for a long time as if Sally would marry the boy and live in Germany, but almost nightly Madge and I would pray that she would come home. Once at a staff meeting, we were sharing some of our personal life, and I spoke about Sally being away. All at once, tears began to flow. It was awfully hard on Madge and me. We had almost given up hope when suddenly we got a call that she was coming, and within a week or so, she was home. We have never been so happy.

At first, back in Louisville, Sally was almost lost. She had no job, she had no friends, and she had no money. She was having a hard time getting hold of herself, but she did fix up her little room to be very attractive, and finally decided to go back to the University to qualify in teaching German, thus qualifying her to teach in three foreign languages. From there, her life became a success story. She became one of the finest language teachers in Louisville, and found no difficulty in being placed in just about any school she chose. She met and married a fine young man, John Stoddard, and as of this writing she has two of the most precious children we could ever know, Paul and Sarah. Madge and I are so very proud of Sally and her family.

Sally and John's wedding was just about the most beautiful wedding I ever took part in, perhaps other than Jean's. Jean's wedding had been in a church where I was in full command,

and everyone took part in it. What made it outstanding was the special music provided by the choir, and the ambience of a congregational worship service. But what made Sally's wedding stand out was the outdoor ambience, similar to the first wedding of Richie. We had a very beautiful back yard in Louisville, and for the wedding, several men from the church came over and worked over that yard like expert horticulturists. Everything was to perfection. We arranged for a violinist to play for about an hour or so before, during, and after the service out under the shade trees in the back. The weather cooperated beautifully. And Sally, Jean, and all the others were dressed beautifully. Our reception was also outdoors, and it went off like clock-work. As I said, it was a beautiful wedding.

It was in 1985 that our first grandson was born on Feb. 27. Madge and I got to be there even during the time of her labor. I never felt so sorry for anyone as I did for little Paul: it seemed that every few minutes there would be a nurse there to give him a shot, or swab his throat, or do something painful. I believe Madge bonded with Paul from the beginning: sometimes Paul did not seem to like being with me but he always liked being with her. Sally and John asked me to baptize him, and for some strange reason I called him "John Paul," instead of Paul Benjamin. I do not know whether I was thinking of his dad, or Pope John Paul. At any rate, I quickly corrected myself, but in the meantime I had given several hundred Harvey Browners a good laugh.

We were still at Harvey Browne in December 1986 when the forty-fifth anniversary of Pearl Harbor came around, and again we were invited to attend the meeting in Hawaii with all expenses paid. We took a plane from Cincinnati, and left our little car in the parking lot. When we returned, it and all other cars were covered with snow so ours was almost impossible to identify. It was really an experience to take a non-stop flight to Honolulu. Once there we went by bus to the Sheraton Wakiki Hotel, and we were really surprised at the grandeur of our room. It overlooked Wakiki Beach; as a matter of fact. we could see right over "The Pink Lady," the Royal Hawaiian Hotel that had been there when I was a sailor. On our table was a complimentary pineapple, one of the largest and most succulent pineapples I have ever seen. The only trouble was that I had no knife to cut it apart. However, it was so soft that I was able to get at it with my hands. The refrigerator was filled with all kinds of liquors and other goodies; at first I assumed they were also complimentary, but on reading their instructions, I found they carried a pretty stiff charge. We did not avail ourselves of any of them.

Herbert and Marguerite also attended the meeting at Pearl Harbor that year, so we got to see them several times while we were there when I was not busy with chaplain functions. Also my first cousin Walter Valloton, whom we always called Buddy, lived on an island near Oahu, and he got to come over to see us. Something sad about Buddy: his first wife had been killed in a boating accident in which the two of them were involved, and then he decided that he wanted a wife who he could manage, so he advertised for a Filipino wife and found one he liked. There in Hawaii they raised orchids to sell wholesale. Buddy brought her over to introduce her to us, and all of us thought she was a very nice person. But Buddy treated her as though she was a slave: she had to do the most menial of things, and do exactly as he said. Now they are divorced. I used to like Buddy growing up. I felt sorry for him that his mother died when he

was an infant and that he had been raised by Uncle Fayette and Aunt Zelma McElwee, who were rather hard on him. But seeing him in this new light, I decided that Buddy the man was far different than Buddy the boy.

Again in our meetings and programs, I was treated almost as if I were royalty. At the parade on Dec. 6, The President of our Club, Tom Stockett, asked me to march up front with him. I had known Tom back on the Worden where he was a crew member for a short time before the war started, but I told him that I felt I should march with my brother Herbert and other members of the Worden crew. This made a big impression on Herbert. Our parade took us near Wakiki Beach and many of the onlookers were dressed in nothing more than swim suits, and some of them were very skimpy at that. I remember one young woman who seemed to be even more daring than the others and when Herbert saw her, he yelled, "Holy Cow." At the Sunset Service on Sunday, Dec. 7,the night before our final day, Madge and I were seated near Ernest Borgnine, the actor, and his wife Tova, and also near Sen. Innoyi, the United States Senator from Hawaii. As a matter of fact, during a lull in the proceedings, I got into a short conversation with the senator. On the next night, at the banquet, Borgnine was our guest speaker, and Madge and I sat on the podium, next to Tova. I felt that we were really in high cotton. However, we were never again given such royal treatment in the organization as we were for these first two conventions.

We had driven to Cincinnati to take a plane directly to Hawaii, and had parked our little Toyota in the parking lot there. But when we returned, we were in for a shock; the whole vast lot was covered with snow, and each car was covered with snow. The car lot looked like a white, bumpy, snowfield, with each car being indistinguishable from the other. Luckily, we knew the approximate location of our car, and by scraping the snow off of license plates one at a time, we were able to locate it.

At the beginning of 1987. I began to think of retirement since I would be 65 that year. But what to do? I did not really want to quit working altogether, and I saw that if I was to stay in Louisville, I would have to simply resign and then take my chances at getting part-time work in the area. I knew competition would be pretty fierce for such work because of the professors at the seminary, the need for seminary students for preaching experience, and the tremendous number of women graduates who were not getting calls to regular work. To get some kind of temporary or part-time work in the area while they were waiting for a call would really be a boost for them.

At one point, I nearly applied for a full-time work in Springfield, Ky. which was about 70 miles from Louisville, but we knew nobody there, and we would not be able to keep our house in Louisville. Besides, we would no longer be able to see Sally and her family on a daily basis anyway. Finally, we saw an attractive ad in Monday Mornin.e; about a small church in Milton, WV needing a part-time pastor. The place appeared nearly equidistant from Jean, Sally, and Richie, so we decided to check it out.

Our first experience with the Milton people was nearly enough to cause us not to consider

that area. When Madge and I went over for me to preach a trial sermon, I preached in a nearby town, and then the committee took us out to eat. But a strange thing occurred; they began taking us all over Huntington, which was about twenty miles from Milton and showed us its various cultural centers, but they took us nowhere near Milton. I was dying to see the house, and the church there; I could have not cared less about Huntington. It was after nightfall that we finally came to Milton, and it was difficult to get a good view. But even with bad lighting, it was obvious that the manse there was one of the poorest we have ever seen. It was plain ugly in every respect.

Then I met with the Session at their request, and from the beginning, elder Joe Smith began to question me. He had a whole list of theological questions lined up, and I could see that they had in mind giving me a real good going over. But I said, "I don't know what you are planning to ask me, but I will tell you this: it is the job of Presbytery to give me a theological examination. The only thing I am willing to discuss with you is the material on the Personal Information Form." They took this rebuff in good grace, although Carol Vickers, the chair of the Pulpit Nominating Committee remarked about me being a bit testy. Later I told them that Madge and I would not live in the manse in its present condition. I felt that they had been trying to hide the condition of the manse from us by taking us in so late, and they too knew how bad a shape it was in. This assessment turned out to be right. They asked me if they really fixed up the manse, if we would then consider taking the job. I agreed.

Madge and I could not have been more surprised than we were at the new appearance of the manse. Whereas it had been drab, dark, and ugly, the members of the Milton church turned it into a place of real beauty. Everything was made lighter; the floors were covered with a beautiful carpet, and colors were all well matched. Members told us of the tremendous amount of work they had done, and the large amount of paint they had used to cover the old drab colors. Also, instead of the old ugly and rusty stove there was a brand new stove, a new refrigerator, and a new dishwasher. The only things still lacking were a place to store our outside tools, and a garage. In addition, the old fence on the outside had just about rotted down, and it was still there. But the main job had been done. Largely because of their seriousness which this effort showed, we decided to accept their call.

The final party given for Madge and me at Harvey Browne was memorable in many respects. One thing that happened was that Audie Brinkenhoffer, the young student worker at Harvey Browne who often played golf with me, put on a show depicting my reaction the time that the yellow jackets got up my pants on the golf course. He had even borrowed the old straw hat that I used to protect my face from the sun. There were many kind words said, and then many gifts, including a golf bag, a set of golf clubs, a microwave oven, and a VCR. Later at the staff party, we were given a set of Louisville stoneware, which must weigh half a ton. Beyond all that, there was a pretty large amount of money given to us. Both Madge and I appreciated the kindness and generosity they showed us.

CHAPTER XVII

RETIRED: BUT STILL WORKING

I accepted the call to go to work in Milton almost immediately upon the termination of my work in Louisville, but we decided not to move too quickly since we were in the process of selling our house in Louisville. We had turned the sale of the house over to one of our church members that we knew in the Round Table Class named Jim Wolfe, and he had many chances at first to sell it at a pretty good price. However, he had told me that it would be worth more than that, and when I would ask him if we should sell at the lower price, he would always say, "That is up to you." It would sound as if he thought we could do better. But when the offers began to dwindle, I began to question if we were holding out for too much. At any rate, it was only after we had moved to Milton that Jim finally sold it, and he did not get as much for it as some of the first offers. Jim died soon after this transaction, and I could not help but feel that worry over our possible loss had something to do with it. Real estate is a pretty uncertain business.

When I went before the committee of West Virginia Presbytery to be examined for membership, I noticed that the Presbytery executive was John Goodman, the same name as a young lieutenant I had known back in DeRidder. I mentioned it to him, and it turned out he was the same person: after his army career he had entered the seminary in Richmond, Va. and had become an ordained Presbyterian minister. I also knew another minister in the Presbytery, Doug Heidt, the associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Charleston. He had been in Little Rock when I was in Stuttgart, and also his mother-in-law had been a member of Harvey Browne when she died, and I had conducted her funeral. Both of these ministers were involved in my installation as minister of the Milton church, and both claimed credit for being a friend over a long period. But the strange thing is that though they were only thirty miles distant, I never saw either one of them again except at Presbytery meetings, and at those times only very briefly. I believe that it is true that Presbyterian ministers of small churches in outlying areas are about the most isolated human beings in existence. I do not believe I could have made it through the years if it had not been for Madge.

Our moving to Milton was more of a process than an one time event. I would go over and stay for a few days, preach on Sunday, and then come home to be with Madge. On my trips over, I would borrow Noah Whittle's truck, and take some of the things I needed most. In this way, we had already moved much of our lighter things by the time we made our final move.

As always in making a move, it is difficult to decide what to take and what to get rid of. I had accumulated many tools of all kinds for working in the woods, and building fences, and making a garden. I just did not feel like I would need them any more. There were also two sets of heavy and-irons, many unframed pictures that Richie had painted but he did not seem to want, and many other things that belonged to the children which we had carried from one place to another. At any rate, I really began to trim down, but looking back, I believe I trimmed too severely. A part of what we are is our remembrances, and the things we hold help us to

remember.

Before plunging too deeply into our Milton experiences, I note that there were several family events that occurred while we were in Louisville which I did not mention, and as I have already printed out my Louisville chapter, I cannot go back to insert those events in the right order.

The first of these began on a rather sad note: the divorce of Richie and Kim. Richie had met Kim while he was working for a Master's degree in English at the University of Arkansas: she was a beautiful young woman and very graceful. She was a professional ballet dancer. All of us really liked Kim, and when Richie and she married soon after Jean's marriage, they asked me to perform the wedding. It was the first outdoor wedding I had ever been in, and it was held in one of the beautiful parks in Toledo, Ohio. They had violin music and it was an altogether lovely affair. All during their marriage, we loved Kim, and thought Rich and she were very happy. But one day Rich called and said that she had left with another man. His heart was broken, and so were ours. We were so angry with Kim for doing this. For a long time Rich grieved over this loss, but finally he began to focus on his work toward a Ph.D. in rhetoric at Carnegie Mellon. By the time he earned his degree, he seemed to have suffered through it. Madge and I had worried that he would never again find a person with whom he could relate in marriage, and his being so far away from anyone who loved him also worried us. But then he met and married Barbara O'Brien, and we were absolutely delighted. She is such a fine person, and Rich is now strongly situated both in a professional way and in a fine family. We are so grateful.

Other events were the graduation of Greg from West Point in 1985 and his marriage to Annie Thorn in 1986. Madge and I had visited Greg on several occasions at West Point and we were always impressed with its beauty (especially the chapel) and discipline of the cadets. We were so very proud of Greg for having attained to this highly prestigious place, and for his ability to rank in the upper 15% percentile in his class. I do not know who was more greatly thrilled when at last they were able to throw their hats into the air; Greg or his mother and I. Greg had met Annie at West Point, and about a year later, they were married in the beautiful chapel. I was not allowed to conduct services there, so I was unable to be the officiating minister, but they did have me to participate. All of our family was there at the time, and we got to meet Annie's folks. We really liked the Thomes, and later when we saw them again at their home in North Carolina, we were much impressed with their hospitality. I remember that when our whole family was at West Point for the wedding, each one of us wanted to do something different, and finally we all busted up and went our own way, and agreed on a meeting place later. Talk about being independent! One other experience was connected to his wedding that is memorable to us: Doris and Ray Rissler of the Harvey Browne Church attended, and they invited all of us to go by their lodge on one of the lakes in upstate New York, and we accepted. For several days Sally and her family, and Rich, and Madge and I were there enjoying their luxurious home on the lake.

One other memorable event occurred just before we left Harvey Browne; little Marie was

born in January of 1987. I took Madge over to stay a week or so with them, and the snow lay upon the ground about two or three feet deep. Somehow I lost my keys in that snow, and even though I knew approximately where I lost them, I could not find them. Later when the snow melted, Bill found them. Marie was a beautiful baby, and did not seem to have so strong a personality as Christie. But that was a wrong evaluation. Marie smiles a lot, and in some ways appears to be shy, but when you get down to it, she can hold her own. I believe both Christie and Marie will do well in life. I was proud when Jean and Bill asked me to participate in Marie's baptism as I had Christie's.

Now to get back to Milton. The house in Milton was two-storied, with all three bedrooms and a study on the second floor. The kitchen, dining room, den, and living room were downstairs. There was also a nice foyer at the front entrance and a utility room at the rear entrance. A large attic which could be used for storage, and even for extra bedding if needed, completed the useable space.

In front there was a nice porch with a three foot high protection wall around it. We put our glider that Wallace Williams had made for us out on that front porch. Something was nearly always happening along that street, or at the park across the road, so we spent many pleasant hours on that porch looking out on the busy world.

At first, our only outdoor storage space was a tacky shelter built under the fire escape ladder on the north side of the house. There was no floor, and my tools soon began to be covered with rust. Also I became more and more aware of our poor parking situation. After I learned that we could construct a good garage for about $5,000.00 if we built it ourselves, I offered to put up about $1,000.00 of this amount if the church would put up the rest. They agreed, and there were about three of us who did the most work, although several others helped at times. The principal worker was also the one who could do carpenter work; Frank Budd, who had recently moved there from New York with his wife Betty. The other hard worker was Emmet Nicolas. Others that made contribution to the work were Charley Heck, Herchel Holley, Ross Vickers, and Joe Smith. When it was finished we had a large, two car garage with plenty of storage space, and doors that would automatically open. Not only that, we had a large cement drive. This was a real substantial addition to our accommodations, and it was a beautiful addition to the residence.

The church was on the adjoining lot, and it consisted of a white wooden frame building with a steeple and a bell, with a concrete block fellowship hall in the rear. The church had a unique beauty in that it had antiqued glass windows that were donated by the Blenco family who owned the large glass factory in town. That glass literally sparkles when the sunlight hits it. Mrs. Blenco was a member of our church, and whenever Madge or I went to see her, she never failed to give us some kind of glassware.

During our first two years at Milton, a day school was held in the fellowship hall by one of our members. But two things happened to cause its demise. One was the fact that its director was apparently not a good business woman. She never seemed to know how to advertise, or

keep things going. Another was the opposition by one of our elders, Charley Heck, to the whole enterprise. He did not like the idea of all those kids using the fellowship hall, and he did not like the director. He claimed she was making a lot of money at our expense, when in fact, from her records she seemed to be losing money. Finally it came to a show-down when Charley said if we let her use it any longer, he was going to discontinue giving his tithe to our church. One of the elders said something about him taking his marbles and going home if we did not play his way, and that was enough for Charley. We never saw him at church again, despite all of our efforts to patch it up.

The use of our buildings for the children gave us one of our few opportunities for outreach, so it was a sore disappointment to me to see it close. But even before that happened, I began to see how hard it would be for us to grow. One of the people who greeted me when I first went to Milton was a young woman and her family that seemed to be very dedicated. But the family never once attended church after I came. I learned that the reason was that the new Presbyterian Church only four miles down the road was attracting a lot of new people, and many young families were attending. A couple of young families from our church had already moved membership there, and this family I met followed them. We were only left with about five young children.

Most of the folks in Milton were very friendly, but some of them had their peculiarities. For example there was Lucie Pritchett, an orphan, who had been raised an a Presbyterian orphanage by a couple of maiden ladies. Lucie's unattractive appearance was only matched by her unattractive personality. Most of the time she would not even answer when spoken to, and for a long time, I assumed she was retarded. When I got to know her better, I discovered that she had a sharp wit. But she liked to tell suggestive stories particularly about ministers. Despite her general lack of any refinement at all, Lucie was nearly always at church on Sunday morning, and she could be counted on to do her part of any work that needed to be done.

We had a rather wealthy couple in the church: Dottie and Emmet Nicolas. Dottie was the one who had inherited the wealth. Her dad had owned about thirty thousand acres of coal mining land. During the time we were there, they were no longer producing coal on their land, but Emmet said that production would begin again when coal was needed. Most often the Nicolases were very friendly and included us in their activities, but then with no warning, Dottie could be cold and unfriendly. Emmet was always friendly. He and I entered into a beekeeping venture together, and he, Frank Budd, and I gardened together on Emmet's property. We liked Dottie and Emmet very much, but we would have rather that Dottie had stayed hot or cold.

Charley Heck, the elder who disputed with our child care operation, had worked himself up through the ranks in the Army to be a Major, and he liked to be called Major Heck. He was nearly always overly friendly until he finally made a decision to withdraw from the church. Then he must have been drinking pretty heavy because he made a rather abusive phone call. I tried and tried to speak in an understanding way on the phone, but his abuse got worse and worse. Finally, he began to call me bad names, and I got a stomach full of it. I said, "No, I am not one. But you are one." Then surprisingly, he became calmer and spoke better. But he did not return

to church again.

Even though we had gotten off to a rocky start, Joe Smith was probably one of my best friends and one of our most solid members. He taught Sunday School, and could be relied on to be friendly and supportive at all times. Joe was afraid of heights; when he had helped work on the garage, he had only been free from his job at the time we put on the roof. This was not a high building so it would seem that being only about ten feet or so above the ground working on a fairly flat roof would not have been all that fearful. Actually Joe handled it all right until he started to come down, and it seemed no power on earth could persuade him to put his foot on that ladder. Finally, all we could do was for one of us to hold his feet, and put them on the ladder while two others of us held Joe's arms. Even then, we almost didn't manage it.

The people in West Virginia were divided between the "valley" people and the "hollow" people. The valley people were more like other Americans; although they were not all cultured by any means, they would hardly be distinguishable from people in Kentucky or Virginia. But the hollow people were distinctly different. As far as I could tell, they were absolutely honest, and they could be depended on to do what they said. They were very quick to come to the aid of a person in need. They were very generous with anything they might possess. And yet, despite all these good qualities, they did not seem to think like other Americans. In some ways, they seemed to have a bunker mentality, as though they were not a regular part of America. Some of their words were completely unknown to me, and not in the dictionary. Their speech was not always understandable. Probably these peculiarities came from the fact that this part of West Virginia was settled mostly from outcasts from Scotland, and isolated there in the hollows of this rough and mountainous state, they had not changed all that much since revolutionary times.

Several families in our church showed some marks of this influence, but none more than Herchel Holley and his family. Herchel's wife was a member of the Hatfield family, and though she did not have any grudge against anybody, I could detect some iron beneath her soft spoken words. Herchel himself was an exceedingly large man, and his speech was somewhat rough (in sound, not in vocabulary). He was a deacon in the church, and he could always be depended on to do any work that needed doing. He and Bessie lived on a large farm area in the hollow, but Herchel worked at a plant so he did not do much farming. However, he had a garden near their house and he was always sharing vegetables from his garden with Madge and me. Some of the vegetables he liked the most were entirely foreign to me, and I had no taste for them.

Herchel had a dream. He had bought up more than a hundred acres of the beautiful hill land around his home, and he would show me different spots that he hoped his children would build on to settle near him. Altogether this was a very fine family, and I considered them very close friends.

The work of the church in Milton was not all that challenging since there were so few members; we never had an attendance of more than thirty or forty. The chief drain of energy was in trying to get something going. With Bessie Holley's help we did get a children's group going before we left, but this group did not add substantially to attendance in the church. We

did undertake some renovations; beside building the garage and a fence around the back yard of the manse, we turned one of the unused Sunday School rooms into a very beautiful Lady's Parlor, and we repainted and refurbished the Fellowship Hall, and other rooms Madge and I both devoted much time and energy to helping the church to grow, but we did not see much fruit from our efforts.

We were happy during our time at Milton to have our children able to come see us on a fairly regular basis, that is, all except Greg and Annie. They were too tied to the Army program at the time. The playground across the street as well as the one behind the church provided a nice place for the children to play. We also enjoyed many visits from the folks at Harvey Browne, some of whom stayed overnight with us. During our relaxing time, Madge and I would often sit on the front porch to watch the many activities either on the street or in the park. I also spent much time exercising on my "rowing machine" in the attic.

Golf became a regular weekly activity for me. There were several friends that I could call on to play with me. Often Frank Budd or Emmet Nicolas from the church would go, but I found my steady golf companions among people outside the church. Bill and John would play with me on their trips over. Bill and I both liked to hunt for lost balls, and often we would find a good deal more than we lost. But once we had a bad experience. One or the other of us hit our ball into some bushes near the water tower, and Bill went over to look for the lost ball. All at once, Bill let our a happy shout; he was finding balls all over the place, so I ran over to find some too. But before I got good and started, Bill let out another howl; there was a huge yellow jacket nest there and he was right in the middle of it. He got stung several times and left a club there. Later we retrieved the club. (Bill, my memory is not too keen; if you can recall this incident, and see any errors in my telling of it, please correct it).

While we were there, the people who owned the land on which the City Park was located decided to sell the property, and many businesses were interested. I saw that this kind of thing would ruin the serenity of the area, and not be good for the church. When the mayor started a drive to save the park, I became very involved in it. I talked the Blenco family into donating a good deal of glassware to sell at an auction we were going to have, and they not only donated it, one of the Blenco family signed every piece so they would be collector's items. They really sold. Madge and I also came up with other money raising devises, and the end result was the City Park was saved. The mayor presented me a plague for this effort, which I still have.

When we left Milton, it was not out of malice for anyone, nor even out of disappointment with the work. It is true that I was not accomplishing as much as I would have liked, but we were accomplishing some things, and the church was at least as well off as when we came. But more and more I wanted to go back to myoId home in Forest Hill for a while to be near my folks there, and also be near Madge's sister in Ponchatoula. I wrote to an old friend in the Presbytery office of South Louisiana Presbytery, Don Campbell, and he helped me to get an interim work at the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Lafayette, La. This was new church development, and it sounded like an exciting work, so we decided to make the move.

As I often do, I made some mistakes in moving: I decided that I would not need near all the books that I had carried with me through the years, and I either gave many of them to the church, or sold them, or gave some to members of the family. But since then, I have sorely missed my collection of hymn books and myoid Hebrew and Greek Lexicons, all of which I left at the Milton church. I am in hopes of getting them back someday. But a worse mistake was in disposing of some of Madge's books. I thought we were getting rid of some duplicates and perhaps a few that she never even remembered having, but such was not the case. She thinks (and perhaps rightly) that I disposed of some of her favorite books.

In leaving Milton, I saw the influence of the "hollow" mentality in West Virginia in a way that I would not have imagined. When the church gave a going away party for us, we noticed that Dottie Nicolas did not attend. Since Dottie was one of the main social leaders there and had been a close friend of ours, we were surprised. As a matter of fact, I saw very little of Dottie from the time I announced our decision to depart to the day of our leaving. I began to hear some rumbling that she was angry at our leaving. After we got to Lafayette, I had to call Emmet about something, and Dottie answered the phone. She began to cry and berate me on the phone, saying "How could you do this to us?" Since that time the Nicolases have not exchanged any kind of greetings with us. The only way I can understand this is that perhaps they looked on us something like pet sheep which they owned, and when we showed independence by leaving, this was more than they could bear. Madge places a kinder construction on this affair: she thinks Dottie's anger arose from her hopes that we would lend stability to the church for many years, and seeing those hopes crushed was more than she could bear. At any rate, I hated this tum of events, because I really liked them.

We arrived in Lafayette long before our furniture; as a matter of fact we had left the furniture in the manse at Milton and asked Joe Smith and Emmet Nicolas to oversee its pick up by the movers. We had to go ahead of the furniture to see about finding a place to live. While we were looking, John and Joan Shaw took us in and let us live with them. Not only that, they showed us around town, and they helped us hunt for a house. No people have ever gone out of their way more than the Shaws to be hospitable to us. They remained our very close friends as long as we were in Lafayette, and even came over to see us when we moved to our next pastorate. After about a week or so, we located an affordable house only a few blocks from the Shaws, and while it had many undesirable qualities, such as a back yard that never dried up, it was a big house and very comfortable. On the whole we enjoyed our stay in it even though it did not have the beauty of many of our former homes.

The work in Lafayette proved to be the most interesting that I have had during my ministry. To begin with, there were flocks and flocks of children. There must have been forty in all, almost as many young children as there had been at the large Harvey Browne Church. In addition, there were several young couples and single parents attending. Many of them were very dedicated, and could be counted on to do almost any job in the church that needed doing. They were full of vitality. And finally, there was a strong cadre of older members that had come from other churches at the beginning to help found this church. I found this church to be alive, and throbbing with energy.

The church really enjoyed its fun times, which usually centered on some kind of Cajun activity. Crawfish boils were the main attraction, and we had them both at a local restaurant with Cajun music and dancing, and at the church. The rule was: beer could be drunk at the restaurant parties, but none at the church parties. So most of this was done at restaurants for the benefit of beer lovers. Madge and I were really surprised at one of the restaurant parties. Most of our adult members were there, and there were many people dancing, when one of the young women in our church asked me if I wanted to dance. I was really tempted to give it a try, but I could see myself stepping on her feet, so I declined. Then one of the young men asked Madge to dance. She also declined. But I felt that we were really included.

One of the main goals of the church at the beginning of my ministry there was the construction of a new building. We were then using a rented building which consisted of two large apartments, and we were making them serve as a place for church meetings, class rooms, and a study. This place was situated off on a side street; it was not commodious in its shape or kinds of rooms it had; and it was mostly unsatisfactory as a meeting place. But the church had purchased a beautiful 4 acre site in a new sub-division, and had plans for a new sanctuary and class rooms. I was told not to get concerned about the new building; it was already on the planning board, and money had already been allocated.

But later, I did worry about the building. From my previous work in new church development at a Presbytery level, I knew that the main emphasis should be put on space and versatility in use of space. But when I saw the cement laid for the sanctuary of the new building, it appeared to be no larger than a small house. It turned out to be a little larger than it at first appeared, but not by a great amount. Crowded full, it could hold only about two hundred people. Further than that, the class rooms were hardly adequate for those then attending. There had been no space allowed at all for growth, and growth was the main purpose of the church. In addition, the space was rather rigidly designed, so that space could not be used for multiple purposes. That was disheartening to me, but we made the best of it. And we had to admit, the design of the building, which had been copied from some small Lutheran Church, was very beautiful.

When we made our move to the new place, we decided to make a special evangelistic push in that area. We were successful in attracting several new families, and I believe we could have attracted many more if we had more space. Among these was a black family, Quincy and Ruby Hilliard and their two children Eric and Alexander. Neither Quincy nor Ruby were very strong on discipline, and those two boys were sometimes hard to bring under control. But everybody in the church liked this family, and gave them a warm welcome. Ruby had been an Episcopalian and Quincy a Methodist minister's son. Ruby taught school, and Quincy was a music professor down at *S.L.V.* After I left, Quincy wrote the music for half-time activities at the '94 Superbowl Football Game in Atlanta.

My brother Robert made a rather generous gift to the new church. Bob and Deborah White, some of the more wealthy members of the Trinity church, had a landscaper to draw up a plan for trees and flowers on the four acre church lot. It turned out that Robert in his nursery had nearly all of the kinds of plants that were desired. I asked him about purchasing these for

the church, and I told him the church was well able to pay for the plants, but a discount would of course be appreciated. Robert assured me that he would take payment for the plants, and he really loaded us up. There must have been several thousand dollars worth of them. But we never received a bill even though I asked Robert for one many times. Finally, Robert said that he was not going to take any money. All I could do was to have the church write him a letter of thanks.

One of the most exciting things about being near Forest Hill again was getting to go a few times into the back country to see again some of the scenes of my childhood. For the most part everything is changed: where formerly there were no fences barring your way to go anywhere you wished, now fences are everywhere. But still, Herbert and I walked several times back to the old Randolph cemetery where Grandma Austin is buried near her son Anderson whose story I told earlier. Also, my Grandfather Young's grandfather William Randolph and his wife are buried there. The cemetery is grown over with bushes and trees, and a gravel pit is about to encroach on it, but the graves were clearly discernible and well marked. Herbert and I also went to the Butter's Cemetery where Grandpa Austin is buried, and to the Amity Cemetery near McNary where Grandma Austin's grandfather Basile Smith is buried.

Another plus in being back in Louisiana was being able to see former friends, At the first Presbytery meeting, I saw four former classmates from Austin Seminary: Mike Parsons, Dick Wells, Gaylord Dodgen, and Ralph Madison. There were also George Fischer whom I had some classes with, but was a year ahead of me, and David Sebesta who I also knew at the seminary. In addition, there was Henry Moore, a friend who was the minister at Mountainburg, Arkansas while I was at Van Buren. Not only these minsters, but many elders were at the meeting that I had known either in DeRidder or at the First Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge. It seemed that I had almost come full circle, back to where I had begun.

Renewing other old friendships added to this feeling of picking up where I had left off.. For example, Clifton Henderson had been a boy I had grown up with in Midway, and he now lived in Lafayette. I made it a point to go see him, but Clifton had changed so much in personality that it seemed I was visiting another person. From various hints I received, I believe he might have been pretty heavily involved with the bottle. He did not seem all that glad to see me, and on my second attempt to see him one afternoon, his wife said that he was resting and she did not want to disturb him. Clifton and I had done so many things together; we had gone rabbit hunting in the snow, walked through the woods to discover a spring, been to church and Sunday School together hundreds of times, and been at school together. But he had dropped out in the fourth grade, so I suppose he thought of me as different because I was more educated.

Others that I saw were Ivy Scott who graduated with me, and lived in Slidell, La., and Odra Bailey, another old schoolmate who lived in Longview, Texas. Ivy had ranked just under me at school, and we had been together for all eleven grades. I always considered him a good friend, but we had never done many things together. I saw him at Christmas time, 1942, in San Diego while we were both in the Navy and visiting in the home of H. 1. and Beverly Poole. I saw him at a high school reunion in Forest Hill, and then he and his wife Ann came to see

Madge and me in Lafayette. He had Altzheimers Disease, was confused about many things, and looked so much older as to hardly be recognizable. Time takes its toll. Odra Bailey was the student that copied off of me in school and never was able to do his own work. The last time I had seen him was at an overnight party some of the boys had after we graduated, down on Cocodrie Lake. Odra had been drinking wine, and went for a boat ride with me during the pitch black night and tipped the boat over. We could not see our hand before our face, and all we could do was cling to a slippery log and yell for the others to come. We had been so relieved to see the carbide lamps of our friends as they winded their way through the cypress trees to find us. Odra turned out much better than I thought he would: he was earning a respectable living, and he was a deacon in the Primitive Baptist Church. I asked Odra if he remembered the boat incident, and he did. He was ashamed of his part in it.

It was during our ministry at the Lafayette Church that the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor occurred, and of course I planned to participate as Chaplain for the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. But if I had to give this section a title, I would call it "Pride Goeth Before A Fall."

For the truth is, I had become a little proud of my status in the association. The members had treated Madge and me almost as if we were royalty; in my capacity as chaplain we had associated with a movie star and a U. S. Senator, and we had been given free air travel to distant places, and rooms in some of the best hotels. But from the beginning of the planning for the 50th year celebration, it was obvious that my station would not be so high as it had been. For one thing, there were now two national chaplains, and an assistant living in Hawaii. Having an additional national chaplain would obviously lessen the importance of my position, but it was this third chaplain who really had the authority, since the Hawaiian Chapter was in charge of planning and would look to him for guidance in setting up the various programs. The outcome of this was that the assistant put himself in all the places where there might be any national recognition, and he placed the other chaplain and me in activities that would be confined to our group.

This step-down was just the beginning of the strange tale. There was to be a huge Luau sponsored by the Pearl Harbor group on the night of the 6th, but since we had not registered for it in time, we bought tickets at $30.00 apiece for another Luau to be held about twenty miles distant from Wakiki where we were staying. Meantime, we learned that the meeting for the Punchbowl Ceremony the next morning set for about 6:30 was to have President Bush in attendance, and we would all have to take a bus over there at about 3 am in order for the FBI to make certain we were not carrying any arms. We left for the Luau about 5 pm, and on the way I asked the bus driver when we could expect to be back. She said it would be 11 pm. I could see that Madge and I could expect no more than two or three hours sleep that night, and as I had part on the program the next day, I thought it would be better if we skipped the Luau and came straight back with the bus driver. I asked her if we could do it, and she called the administrators at the office, and they said we could. She said that we would have to stop by and pick up a load of Japanese at the airport, but there would be enough room for us.

All went well until we reached the airport and the Japanese began to board the buss. The

Japanese woman in charge of the group looked at us and asked what we were doing on the bus. The driver explained the situation, but it was obvious the woman didn't like it. I heard her talking in Japanese (her voice sounded angry, and her face certainly showed anger) with the people who were boarding the bus, and then she went into the main office to use the telephone. She came back and told the driver that she had rented the bus and that the space belonged to her, and that she had called the main office and they agreed that we would have to get off. By this time, the Japanese had boarded. The driver said to us, "I take my instructions from the office of my company, and the last thing they said to me was that you can ride. So we are leaving." With that, she pulled out and we were on our way. But we did not get far, no more than one or two miles, when the phone on the bus rang. It was her main office. They said that Madge and I would have to be put off the bus. So we were put off on the main road leading to town, on an underground highway.

We heard a lot of traffic above us, so we went to a stairway that led up, and found a bus-stop on the top level. After a long wait, a city bus came by, and we thought we had it made. But our troubles were not nearly over. On that bus were some characters so weird that it would be hard to describe them. I had on my Pearl Harbor cap, and one of them began to preach me a sermon saying that I should stop hating the Japanese and forget Pearl Harbor. I tried not to get engaged in an argument, but did feel good when an ex-marine sitting behind us spoke up in defense of Pearl Harbor veterans. At one time things began to turn so ugly that I almost feared that someone would be killed. But eventually, after what seemed ages, our bus came near to our Sheraton Wakiki Hotel and we got off. It turned out to be after 11 pm when we got to bed after all.

The next morning we boarded a bus at about 3 am to go to the Punchbowl, and old cemetery where many Pearl Harbor veterans were buried. The assistant chaplain was to have the prayer when President Bush was there, so he had a place on the podium but to my surprise, there was no place either on the podium nor anywhere else provided for me and Madge to sit. I had to argue with the FBI even to let me come down past the barricades, and would not have been able to get there had not several national officers who were in the same boat as I told the FBI that I was on the program and must go down. He made a call to verify that I had a part on the program and finally let us in. When we got to the seating area, I found a few seats provided for dignitaries who had not come so we sat in them. Not only that, I was able to find a few extra seats and was able to get the FBI to allow other national officers to come down. As the president had to pass right by me going in and going out, I asked the FBI agent standing near me if I could shake hands with the president. He said that he had never known the president to tum anyone down for a handshake, so when he came out, I stuck out my hand and he shook it. But I noticed that he did not look me in the eye. I felt that I had somehow allowed myself to be degraded. After all, Bush was no king. I did notice however that all the scores of news media cameras immediately went off once the president left. It was almost as if what the president said or did was important, and what we the survivors did to commemorate our comrades was of no importance at all. Other than these experiences and a couple of other functions where I had a part and was provided no seat, I enjoyed much of my time at the t anniversary. But I was reminded in a very real way that I was far happier when I saw myself

as a person who was there to serve our organization rather than as one who was to be served by it.

Just before we had gone to Hawaii, our fourth grandchild was born: little Sarah Jean was born to Sally and John. Madge and I made arrangements to go home on different planes; she went to Louisville, and I returned home.

Back to the Trinity Church, there was a helicopter pilot who seemed to be a very dedicated Christian: he sang in the choir, he was always in attendance, and he could be counted on for any work that needed to be doing. He had previously served on the active session of the church. He was a very likeable. person, but more and more I began to suspicion that he was homosexual; in addition to be "Urtmarried at around the age forty, he had another unmarried young man living with him. One day he came into my office and said he there was something he wanted to talk about. He said that he wanted me to know that he was a homosexual, that he and a friend were living together, and that he wanted to again be elected to the active Session. I told him that I could not approve of that since I believed what he was doing was sinful and the Presbyterian church had made the decision to not ordain practicing homosexuals. At this he began to argue with me that what he was doing was right: God had made him that way, and nothing God did was wrong; he deserved happiness just like any heterosexual; the Bible had been interpreted at one time to support slavery and witch-burning, but these activities where now looked on as evil; etc. I listened to him for more than an hour, but did not change my mind. I did try to tell him why I believed as I did, and what I believed was the right solution for the problem. I scored no points with him for this effort. He became very angry at me for "not listening." He visited me a couple more times before I left the church, and each time he became more fierce in his arguments, and more bitter toward me for not changing my mind. Mter I left, I understand that he took part in the "gay march" before our 1993 General Assembly, and he went before the Session of the Trinity Church, acknowledging himself as a practicing homosexual and asking to be accepted back as an officer if elected by the congregation. The Session voted against him, and he has withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church.

We went to the Trinity Church with the understanding that my work was on an interim basis, and that as soon as the church was able to call another pastor, I would be on my way to some other place. This arrangement worked a strain on Madge and me in two ways. First were the prayers at almost any kind of meeting that God would send them a minister. Of course, I could understand they wanted someone who was permanent, but to be constantly reminded that they wanted me replaced was not all that easy on my self-esteem. But more than that, the search committee kept coming up with someone that they thought would be coming very shortly to try out for the work, and looked very promising to the committee. At one point in the summer of 1991, from the way they were talking, I thought they had someone right ready to come, so I responded favorably when someone from the Amite-Arcola Church asked me if I would consider work there. As time went on, it became obvious that Trinity was not going to be able to call the person they wanted, but by then I felt half committed to the Amite church. This was the first time that I ever really left a church without really wanting to go, and the people in Lafayette obviously wanted us to stay. But I did not see how I could honorably tell the Amite church that

I was not coming, especially since they were calling me almost daily making arrangements.

We made plans to move at the end of 1991, and we discovered that the Amite-Arcola church was not only conservative, small, and non-growing, it had virtually no children or young people. There was only one Sunday School class that met every Sunday, and the youngest people in it were about sixty. Occasionally a younger group of about four or five would meet, and they were in their fifties. Two Qr three children would sometimes come on Sunday, but there was no regular teacher for them. There is no question but that the church in Lafayette was much more alive, challenging, and enjoyable to work in than the church in Amite. Besides that, we really enjoyed the Cajun food, and the general liveliness of the people in that area. I had several golfing partners who I could usually rely on, so we knew that Amite would not come up to Lafayette in terms of our enjoyment of life.

It was not long before I learned why the name of the church in Amite was Amite-Arcola Presbyterian Church. Before the Civil War, a church had been started in Arcola, about four miles distance from Amite, by the Methodists. For awhile it had been Congregationalist after a large group of Congregationalist settled in nearby Roseland, and it was not long before it had been turned over to the Presbyterians. The building they used was a large wooden structure, and it had been altered and rooms added many times in the intervening years. Its location on one the beautiful rolling hills of the area, its distinctive architecture, and the old cemetery near it, give the structure and imposing and magnificent appearance. It still has the old slave quarters up in the balcony. But about thirty years ago, both the Amite and Arcola Churches had become smaller in number and decided to unite and build a new church in Amite. As so often happens in unions of this nature, many of the folks did not want to unite, so many former Presbyterians are now Baptists and Methodists. The former church house in Amite was sold and is now used as a restaurant, and the old Arcola building still belongs to our church. I have conducted services there many times, usually on Sunday evenings in the summer.

In Amite, I never did develop any golf buddies as nearly all the golfers were old-timers in town who had their own crowd. None of the other ministers played golf, and it proved difficult to relate to any of them in any other way. But there have been several positive things about living in this area. One is the beauty that surrounds us. The pine trees are just magnificent, and living on Pecan Street is much like living in a park. The house itself has much window space and is a very gracious place to live. Birds of all kinds abound, and squirrels come daily to feed right outside our window. Once there was a skunk that came right up to our large glass door and looked me straight in the eye before he turned around and trotted off. This close encounter with a skunk was quite a thrilling experience for me since I had never seen one very well even from a distance, let alone up close.

Once I was talking to one of our members, Elizabeth Biscotto, about having seen flying squirrels when I was a youngster, but had never seen any since. I suggested that they might be almost extinct. She said, "My barn is full of them, and I would like nothing better than to be rid of them." One day I made it a point to go to her house to see the squirrels, and I got to see them, but it was different to see them crowded up in a barn than seeing them sail from the high

trees when I was younger. In her barn they looked little larger than a large rat, but my memory had them down as about the size of a large squirrel. Again, I am reminded how fickle our memory can be.

By far the largest attraction to this area has been the nearness of the Easley family. Hardly a week goes by without our seeing them, and sometimes we see them more frequently. It has been a good thing to renew our closeness to them, especially since we are now in our senior years and do not have all that much time left to us. John and Valerie's children have treated Madge and me almost as if we were their adopted parents, and have made us feel more than welcome. We will certainly miss all of them when we leave.

Don and Sybil live only about thirty miles beyond John and Valerie, but we do not get to see them near as much. Don is now working pretty hard, and has a very important rep job that takes him traveling over three states. He does enjoy being close to his three daughters and their growing families, which occupies most of his leisure time. But we do get to see them now and then, and it is always a real pleasure. Paul and his family live over in Florida, which is far nearer to us now than when we lived in Lafayette, but still too far to see them often. We do have family gatherings occasionally which they attend, and they also come by here when traveling to see Minora's folks. It has been so good to see and be with Madge's and my families as we will no longer be able to see them much when we move.

While we were in Lafayette, we visited my family in Forest Hill fairly frequently, at least monthly. But Amite is a four or five hour drive, and making a return trip in one day is difficult, so we do not attempt to do it often. Earlier this year (early spring,1994) Jewel was coming down from Ohio and wanted all of us to meet in Forest Hill. Wallace's wife Mildred had just died, and this would be a chance to meet with him. I went over to help arrange an eating place for the gathering, and I talked to Herbert and Marguerite about coming to be with the others of us,but they declined to come since Herbert has been having a feud with Jewel for a number of years (mostly one-sided on Herbert's part, I believe, since Jewel wanted him included). When we met, in addition to Robert and Edith, Essie Dee was there from Beaumont, Wallace and Lisa from Corpus Christi, Dennis and Marianne from Jacksonville, Fla., Jewel and Howard from Colombus, Ohio, and yours truly and Madge. Wallace's son Benji and his large family came from Houston, and all of Robert's sons and their families were there except David. We sorely missed our older sister Ruby who died many years ago with heart trouble, but she was represented by Jodi and her family, and Mike and his family. Robert insisted on paying the bill. Of course I know he is by now fairly wealthy and could afford it, but I think the real reason is that he kind of thinks of himself as the father of us all now that our parents are dead. He asked me to give the prayer and say anything I wanted to say. I believe I used poor judgement in telling some of the stories included in this autobiography about Grandpa Austin, but at the time, I thought it would be well if his great grandchildren could know something about their heritage. This gathering was truly a remarkable and satisfying time. It hurt however that Herbert, who lived across the railroad track from where we met, did not even come to see us.

The people in the Amite church could not have treated us better. They let me name the

amount of time that I wanted to work, and when experience showed that this amount of time was inadequate, the1quickly agreed to compensate me for the amount of extra time needed. All of them have supported Madge and me in a personal way, and mostly they have been pretty regular in attendance. Several of them have had us into their homes, and have tried to befriend us in a personal way. Last Christmas, the Richard Kent family invited us to have Christmas dinner with them since none of our children were home.

I had an unexpected honor in Amite when I was asked to speak to the local chapter of the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy. I was awarded a beautiful medal. This was made possible since my great-grandfather Joseph Austin was a soldier in the Civil War and was killed in the Battle of Mansfield. Ownership of this cross might made me not so politically correct, but I am glad to have it. Perhaps our ancestors were not all that right in where they stood on all issues, but they did show a courage that was remarkable even for those times.

Mainly through Madge's efforts, we have been able to show some growth since we have been in Amite. She immediately started a class for younger children and at one time it grew to around twelve. But most of the growth depended on the families of two sisters, and recently they had a falling out, and now both of their families seem to have quit. Weare not quite back to square 1, but almost. There have been a few adult additions to the church, mostly the husbands of women members who had not yet joined with their wives. All in all, the church is just about as it was when we came, with the exception that everyone is a couple of years older. If a new and younger crowd is not somehow recruited, this church will not last more than about ten more years.

During the summer of 1993 we began house hunting in Louisville. That is the area we had decided to finally locate in because we had so many friends from the Harvey Browne Church who lived there, and of course the main attraction was Sally and her family. But despite our desire to live in Louisville, we were having a hard time locating a specific place. We wanted a little land with our place if possible, and we found a place on Rudy Lane with a couple of acres, but Madge felt they wanted too much. We made them a counter-offer but we could never settle on an agreeable price. We were still trying our best to find some place in Louisville when to our surprise, one day during the fall of 1993 we got an excited call from Jean: the Sunnyside Presbyterian Retirement Community near her was to have a vacancy in their chaplaincy program, and they would be looking for a part-time chaplain. This seemed almost predestined for me: not only had I training in chaplaincy, I had done my work for my D. Min. degree among older adults and my dissertation concerned older adult education. More than that, the minister of Jean's church recommended me, and it seemed that no one else would even be considered. One matter did arise that presented some problems to me: the person taking the position would have to sign in on a time sheet for work hours, and also the pay was only about one-half or less than I have receiving for the same amount of work expected. Also, I would have to do a lot more preaching, and would be expected to have close supervision. All of this seemed demeaning to a person who has long enjoyed professional standing, so in my first letter to the head chaplain, I pointed out these difficulties. He thought we could alTange to get around the difficulties, so I agreed to come see him when we were over to see Jean and her family.

I was so sure by then that the job was mine for the taking, that I decided that Madge and I should go house hunting. Jean took us to several interesting places, and we liked several of them. But before I left to see Jean, I had written to the executive director of the Massanetta Springs Conference area which was contiguous to the retirement -center, and asked about the possibility of obtaining property there. It turned out that Arnold Poole who I had contacted earlier to obtain the executive director's number, really wanted to sell his large house, Rockwood Lodge. We got together on a rather handsome price, which I felt we could afford since I was to continue working. But after interviewing with the chaplain, he mentioned that he had others who lived in the area that he was obligated to interview, and I got a strong feeling that he was just going through the formality with me and had no intention of calling me to the work. When he asked me a question about how much I wanted to work with older people, I gave him a frank answer to the effect that I was not all that anxious. Possibly because of this, or for other reasons I do not understand, I was turned down for the work.

This debacle caused me to have to cancel plans for buying the house from Arnold Poole, but later I was able to scrape together an accounting of all our assets, including loans we could make on our insurance, and I made him an offer of the whole works. Arnold accepted the offer provided I would add to it another $4500.00 which he allowed me to pay through a personal loan. Thus we have a house, mostly paid for, but on a plot ofland owned by the Synod of Mid-Atlantic and leased to *us.* This is a very beautiful place, and it will be near Jean, and within a day's journey of any of our children.

We are now in the process of boxing all our material goods that will go in one, and preparing to move to Virginia. We are sorry that we had to disappoint Sally in not moving to 'Louisville as we promised, but feel so fortunate to be able to live in such a lovely place as Massanetta Springs, and grateful to live near Bill and Jean, Christie and Marie. We continue to face the future with confidence as we look for years of leisure, volunteer work, and retirement activities. Truly the Lord has been good to *us.*

ADDENDUM

I am beginning to write this addendum on July 14, 2009 , and plan to make it a brief description of what has happened in my life since my last entry. At that time, I had just resigned from my interim work in the Amite Presbyterian Church in Louisiana, and had moved up to Virginia to be near our daughter Jean and her family. That was 15 years ago, and we have now moved again to Sunnyside, the Presbyterian retirement center next door to our home over in Massanetta Springs.

We live in the semi-high-rise called "Highlands" which is a four story apartment building, having about 100 units. Basically one meal per day is furnished us, and several other amenities, including an on-call nurse, a game room, a library, and meeting rooms. We can also purchase any meal we wish beyond the one meal afforded. There is a free wellness center, a barber shop and beauty center, a bank, and a small store. We are treated well, and with respect.

In addition to what we have here in this building are other facilities and programs available to us. We have a chaplain, and a chapel with regular services. We have an outside putting green, and we have tournaments, which I have done rather well in. There are also programs such as game nights for bridge and pinochle. They make it their aim here to make our retirement as pleasant and care-free as possible.

The reason we gave up our home and came here is mainly because of my growing awareness that we are getting old, and are no longer able to handle our affairs as well as we used to. Madge did not wish to move, and it was only after much persuasion that she agreed to come. I noticed her need for an easier life when she began to get confused with figures, such as bank statements and working on our income tax, which she had always taken care of. Also, she has a growing problem of forgetfulness, being now at the stage where she needs to ask the same question over and over.

She still misses her old home over at Rockwood Lodge, with all the big rooms and large shady grounds, but seems to becoming more content the longer we are here. She no longer has to do any cooking, and very little else since we have a maid to come once weekly. Her main activity centers on reading, and her weekly prayer group

As for me, I began to notice my aging in getting so tired with all the work around our house. There seemed to always be grass to mow, or leaves to rake, or trash falling from the trees, or flower beds to tend, or need to paint the house or repair it, or a dozen other tasks. In addition, during the winter I tried to keep the wood stove burning through the cold winter nights which required a good deal of work.

I think others of the family might be more perceptive about our aging than are we who are engaged in it. I remember about ten years ago I mentioned that I thought I was beginning to turn gray, and perspicacious Jean said, "Dad, let me tell you something."

So we are now here at Sunnyside.

Our life did not slow down much until fairly recently. Since we came to Harrisonburg, I have done interim work at several churches, either on a full time or part time basis.

My first interim here was at the Franklin Presbyterian Church in West Virginia. I found the people there to be so welcoming and easy to work with, that I probably could have stayed much longer than the year and half of my first interim; however they found a fairly young pastor who said he would like to spend the rest of his ministry there, and both they and I were glad he could take over. It turned out that he needed a better work for his wife who was also a pastor, and he only stayed three years so I was back there to work again. That time I stayed only a year, but they called me a third time, and I was only needed a half year. Madge and I lived there while I worked as interim, and we enjoyed that work and the people as much as any other place we served.

I also served a short time as interim at the Calf Mountain church called GlenKirk, near Waynesboro, VA. I called that church the "hugging church" because nearly all the members loved to hug one another and hug the preacher, which I was not used to. Another church which I served was the historic Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church near Lexington, VA, This church was too far distant from Harrisonburg for us to commute, so we lived in the manse there. I served there about a year and a half. The church was founded near 1750 and the land was sold to the church at a good price by the grandfather of Sam Houston. Later, Sam was born only about a block from the church building and was baptized there before his family moved to Tennessee.

Another church which brought us great joy in our service was the Mossy Creek Presbyterian Church, only about twenty miles south of Harrisonburg. It too is an old church with a rich history, but not dating near so far back as Timber Ridge. We lived in our home at Rockwood Lodge during my ministry there, which lasted nearly two years.

I served only one more interim, a three month stretch at Pines Chapel, near Staunton. The people there were most friendly, as is usual for a country church, and we had many good times there. I was really impressed with their singing. It was not so much that they were well trained, or high class; it was that they sang with such joy and with gusto. In my opinion, they sang as Christians are wont to sing when they are happy with their religion.

As one can see, our 15 years at Rockwood Lodge were mostly spent in my doing interim work in various churches. But in between, Madge and I got in a good bit of travel.

One reason for our travel was due to my position in the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association (PHSA). I joined the organization while I was in Stuttgart, and attended a few of the meetings in Memphis, TN. When the national chaplain died in 1983, I wrote to some of my friends in PHSA and said I would like to be considered as a replacement. Not long after, some of my friends in PHSA convinced the national president to name me as the new chaplain, and I held that post from 1984 until 2004. During this period, my main function was to offer prayers at meetings or for special occasions, offer thanks at our dinners, help lay wreaths at ceremonies, and give benedictions.

My first experience as national chaplain of PHSA was in their 1984 meeting at Grossingers, a Jewish spa in New York. At the memorial dinner, Madge and I sat at table near the rear of the crowd of about 2000 folks, and never expected be recognized in any way except to say the blessing. All at once we heard my name being called over the loudspeaker, asking me and Madge to come forward and sit at the head table. From that time until our last meeting as national chaplain, we were recognized in that manner.

While at the meeting in Grossingers, our group held a memorial service at West Point. I had a part in the service, and was proud that our son Greg, then a student at West Point, was able to attend the service where I was a speaker.

One ofthe perquisites of being national chaplain was having either both Madge and my way, or my way alone, paid to the 5th year anniversary meetings in Hawaii, including hotel and airfare. At the end, when our numbers had fallen so low that such support could not be afforded, I had to make provisions for my own expense. Madge and I also got to meet and even sit at dinner with several movie stars and political figures, as well as high ranking officers in the Navy. I have included a picture ofthe bulletin of one service in which I participated in a service with ex-president George Bush and movie star Cliff Robertson.

Madge and I were able to go to Hawaii three times while I was the national chaplain, I went once with Greg and Ian, with Greg affording air fare. But our travels have been far more extensive than with PHSA,

Soon after coming to Harrisonburg, VA we found out about a very inexpensive one week Carribean cruise aboard a cruise ship, and away we went. The chief memories I have of that cruise was the good food, but we did visit many islands, the Yucatan, and the Florida keys. It was all in all, well worth what we paid for it.

Even while we were serving the church in Milton, WV we had gone to see Greg and Annie in Germany where he was serving as a captain in the army, and while there taking a brief trip to England. Afer coming here to Harrisonburg, we went on a trip with a group, led by Tim Easley, to Italy, Switzerland, and Paris. Jean and her family also went on that trip. Our most memorable trip was to Jordan where we got to see many Old Testament places including Mt. Nebo, and ruins of some cities mentioned in the New Testament. We also saw the red rock city carved in a mountain, named Petra, and I was able to go floating on the red Sea. While there, Madge and I rode camels, and she proudly displays a photo to prove she actually did it.

Our most recent trip, and in all likelihood our last one, was to retrace Paul's first missionary journey. Early this spring, we caught a plane for Egypt. We landed in Cairo and spent a large part of that first day riding in a sailboat on the Nile, and going through the Egyptian National Museum. The next day we visited the three pyramids of Giza, the sphinx, and of course, several commercial places where we were urged to buy souvenirs. Then we caught a ship for the ports of Israel, and we slept aboard the ship for the next 8 nights, and went sight-seeing by day. We were in the area of Galilee the first day, and then around and in Jerusalem for two more days. We sawall the usual sights that tourists

see there, but whether they were anywhere near the area where the events occurred that they were supposed to represent, I have no way of knowing, and am fairly skeptical about believing. Then on to Turkey, for a couple of days to such places as Antioch and Perga, and finally to Greece and the Acropolis. Whew! What a whirlwind tour. Actually I have forgotten most of it already.

As Madge and I tread down the last trails of life together, we are slowing down in our activities. We plan to go on no more trips; however, we have said several times after going to our old homes in Mississippi and Louisiana that this would be the last time, and we would later change our minds. I am in very good health, and probably could have continued longer with taking a short interim, or at least preaching occasionally, but my voice now gives me a good deal of trouble and it seems to be even worse at times of public speaking. I have preached for one service here at Sunnyside and I was recently asked back for a Sunday at Franklin, but declined. Our granddaughter Marie asked me to participate in her marriage service earlier this June, and her sister Christie has asked me to participate in her August wedding. While I feel honored that they are including me, I do not feel that my croaking voice does much to make their weddings more beautiful.

I will mention one thing I learned about my family history since I have been here. My brother Herbert had run into some genealogy years ago that determined we were Huguenot descendants. It seems that my grandfather Young's grandmother had the maiden name of Sarah Jaudon, and she had descended from Pierre Robert, the first Huguenot minister who settled in America. He had changed to the Anglican ministry so he could keep his credentials, since he lived in Santee, S. C. in which the Anglican church was established. Sarah's family, along with many other Huguenots had migrated to Rapides Parish, LA. And she had married my great great grandfather William Randolph, a prosperous farmer living near Forest Hill, LA.

I had often heard of the Randolph cemetery out in the woods near where I grew up, and had passed a large three storied home on my way to school every day of my school life, but did not know that either had anything to do with me. It turns out that the old deserted cemetery was named for my kin William Randolph and his wife Sarah. A couple of years ago, my granddaughter Christie and I were able to go find the place of their burial after a struggle through the woods and the underbrush ~between Lecompte and Forest Hill, LA. Also, the large building was where they had owned a plantation of about three thousand acres with many slaves. It seems that after the Civil War, they lost their plantation piece by piece, and at their death were fairly poor.

In the seminary we had studied about the Huguenots, and their brave stand during the Reformation, but at that time I had no clue that any of my ancestors were counted among them.

Here I close my autobiography, hopefully for the last time. Life goes on, though more slowly. And as the old saying goes, "I do not know what the future holds, but I do know who holds the future." I am very grateful for the life which the good Lord has enabled me to live.

Pictures around and in Rockwood Lodge, our home iin Massanetta Springs. Is Ian mad about something?